FIRST ISSUE COMICS: ARE THEY WORTH INVESTING IN?

COMIC BOOKS

COMICS FEATURE™

NUMBER 56
JUNE 1987
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He's back!
The exclusive story behind:
THE SILVER SURFER

A VILLAIN HISTORY OF
DOCTOR DOOM

MIKE BENTON'S TIPS ON
INVESTING IN COMICS

UNCLE SCROOGE COMES TO TV ANIMATION
DUCK TALES

RON GOULART'S FEMALES OF THE FUNNIES
ELLA CINDERS

A UNIQUE INDEPENDENT COMIC
WORDSMITH

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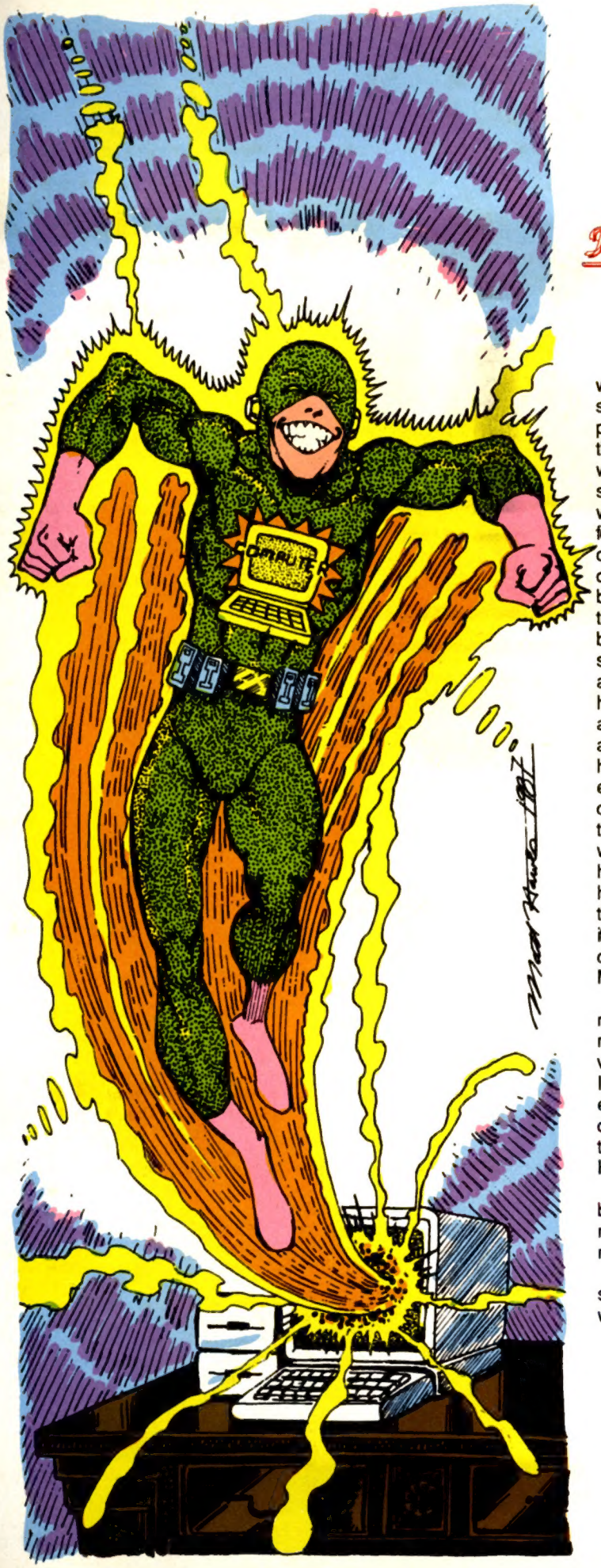

Happy Hal's Howlings

This editorial is an important experiment. The difference with any luck will not be immediately noticable to you. With it we attempt an important step into the future. Instead of typesetting the editorial with our standard photomechanical typesetting equipment utilizing a filmstrip to photograph the letters and then developing them on a normal photographic paper with chemicals , we are applying a whole new technology. The manuscript is prepared on a computer and then the image is created utilizing what is known as a laser printer. The versatility and creativity in page format that this will allow when we begin to make more widespread use of the process is breathtaking. As this year passes, there is a great deal of additional new technology that will work with this process that can also be applied. This additional equipment will enhance the quality of the letters to a much greater degree. Beginning with the next issue we will also be utilizing an optical character scanning device to input the manuscripts. This amazing device allows you to scan a page of typewriting and capture it as a text file that you can than manipulate just as if you had typed it in. In addition, we have also attached a modem and will be able to download a manuscript over the telephone lines. This means that a writer will be able to type his piece into a word processing program on his computer at home and then send it over the telephone to our computer here at the office. Ultimately each of our art directors will also have a computer at home and as we design complete pages on computer now, they won't even have to come in to the office to show and discuss their work with me. They will be able to send it to the computer screen at my house or the one at the office. Yes, I have already put one in at my home. I had use of the office computer at home as I was learning the page makeup system to teach the others and simply fell in love with it. So now Happy Hal playfully works with his computer. Somehow it doesn't quite seem like work as I type this in my own room on my own Mac Plus and output it on my Laserwriter Plus.

I wanted to make this editorial the very first piece to use the technology. Although I now work with no less than a dozen publications every month, **Comics Feature** has a very special place in my heart. It was my very first magazine and is still the one I enjoy the most.

I do apologize for taking this space this month, one where we normally engage in such erudite and important discussions on the fate of the four color world, to ramble on about something so mundane as office conditions, but I really am excited. And I felt that you would indulge Ol' Happy Hal just this once.

You should begin to appreciate this new setup as the artists begin to better understand the technology of both the graphics and the page makeup programs. And if comic book lovers don't appreciate new technology, who will?

On another note, I do hope that you enjoy this issue and don't understand why you haven't dived in to read the words of far more interesting writers than....

HAPPY HAL

COMICS FEATURE

NUMBER 56 JUNE 1987

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FEATURES

THE SILVER SURFER SOARS AGAIN!

Almost two full decades ago, the Silver Surfer enjoyed a brief 18 issue run in his own title. Then he passed into the ranks of secondary characters, guest stars. Yet those 18 issues—in fact the first ten issues—established him as a fan favorite. He became a cult favorite to a small but articulate portion of fandom and something of a hero on college campuses across the country. And he became the very personal favorite of Stan The Man (Lee) himself.

Now he is back in his own series once again and writer Steve Englehart and penciller Marshall Rogers have cosmic plans for him. They plan to set him free of the exile on Earth that Galactus had imposed on his recalcitrant herald, but that's only the beginning. After that the Surfer will be meeting virtually every cosmic-powered gun in the Marvel Universe. Englehart and Rogers talked to Feature to explain their plans, how they view the character and even what they consider to be the authentic Surfer canon. And guess which two Surfer stories now "officially" never happened!

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COLUMNS

INDEPENDENT LINE—
Wordsmith is the most unique character in comics. He doesn't stalk the back alleys in search of crime or span the starways but every issue is captivating. Plus the latest news.
9

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Concluding our first Villain History as James Van Hise completes the chronicle to date of Dr. Doom. Including a look at the upcoming graphic novel in which the monarch of Latveria conquers the world!
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SILVER AGE—
Radio Comics produced some of the most colorful superheroes of the '60s. The Fly and Flygirl gained their powers from the world of insects while The Jaguar had all of the powers of any member of the animal kingdom. Will Murray recalls the many exploits of the costumed crusaders!
46

ANIMATED ANTICS—
Uncle Scrooge is the most popular character ever to appear in a Disney comic book, yet he has never starred in his own cartoon. Now Walt Disney Productions is about to remedy that with a new syndicated series featuring the adventures of the world's richest duck!
50

FEATURE NEWS

THE SPIDER-MAN WEDDING: TOO BIG FOR JUST ONE COVER

The comic bookbwedding of the year is so big it requires not one ..but two covers!

John Romita, Sr., Spidey artist extraordinaire, has drawn two different covers for **Spider-Man Annual** #21, shipping may 19. One cover will appear on the comics shipped to the direct market, the other on the news- stand editions.

The direct market cover will show the actual wedding party, including Aunt May, Anna Watson, J. Jonah Jameson and other members of Peter Parker's intimate circle of friends.

The newsstand cover will represent a dream battle that takes place in the story, with Spider-Man in his traditional red-and-blue costume. He and Mary Jane are flanked by Elektro, Dr. Octopus, Kingpin and the Lizard (on one side) and Wolverine, Capt. America, Daredevil and the Human Torch on the other.

"We wanted to have Spidey appear in his red-and-blues for so important an occasion," Editor Jim Salicrup explained. "The dream sequence provided the perfect opportunity."

The newsstand appearance of the annual will coincide with the mid-June wedding in the "Amazing Spider-Man" comic strip by Stan Lee and Larry Lieber, he noted.

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"With the kind of promotion we have planned, this really is the wedding of the year," he commented.

Direct market retailers will be offered the opportunity to order both versions through a special solicitation form.

NIGHT AND THE ENEMY: AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR HARLAN ELLISON TO PRODUCE GRAPHIC NOVEL WITH ARTIST KEN STEACY

Eight and 1/2-time Hugo Award-winning author Harlan Ellison and artist Ken Steacy have joined forces to create **Night and the Enemy**, an 80-page full color graphic novel to be published by Comico The Comic Company, it was announced today by Administrative Director Bob Schreck.

The book will consist of five early Ellison short stories, two of which have not seen print since 1956-57. The remaining three were previously published in a graphic format, with art by Steacy, in **Epic Illustrated**. Two of those stories were presented in black and white, but will appear in color for the first time in Comico's upcoming graphic novel.

Ellison recently commented on the project's origins, stating, "Many eons ago, when I first discovered there was such a thing as science fiction, like everyone else I was knocked out by the 'integrated universe' concept as manifested in Heinlein's Future History series, Asimov's Foundation yarns and, later, by Niven's Known Space books. In terms of comics, the Kree-Skrull War stuff tickled the same risibility.

"I hate sequels," Ellison continued, "and have never written them; yet I did write independent stories set against the background of Earth's two-century-long war with a race known as the Kyben. The finest artist in the universe, Ken Steacy, and I have gathered these stories, I've created a framing device that unifies them and we now propose to present them through the good offices of Comico."

Steacy will produce the cover and brand new artwork for two stories, as well as reworking the previously-published color and black-and-white material to give the package a unified look.

"Mr. Steacy has managed miraculously to exceed even his breathtaking level of best efforts," stated Ellison, "and I am as happy as an Odor-Eater in a bedroom slipper with the result. It's gonna be one snappy item, and without even the faintest scintilla of self-serving greed or venality in my recommendation, I urge all who seek the pinnacle of literature to reserve a copy of this work, one that melds my own miniscule talents with the awesome style and craft of Steacy, who has been a real inspiration to all of us. (Can you imagine how substantial a bribe it took to get me to say all of this stuff? Don't ask.)"

"Harlan and I have a very synergistic relationship," Steacy recently commented. "Working with him has been marvelous. He has given me excellent objective criticism, but knows when the prerogative is mine to make an artistic decision."

"We are very proud to be able to present Mr. Ellison's work in

SIX GRAPHIC NOVELS BY MOEBIUS

The rumors are true.

Beginning in May, Marvel Comics will publish six full-color graphic novels featuring science fiction and . fantasy tales by a man whose works have influenced an entire generation of comic book writers and artists —Jean MOEBIUS Giraud. The series will appear under the Epic imprint and will begin with the first English-language edition of **Upon a Star**,. It will be followed by **Aazzach and Other Fantasy Stories**, **The Airtight Garage, The Long Tomorrow and Other Science Fiction Stories, The Gardens of Aedena, Pharagonisa and Other Strange Stories .**

"This is the first comprehensive collection of Jean Giraud's science fiction and fantasy works ever published in the United States," Epic Editor Archie Goodwin noted. Many of the tales will appear in color for the first time ever. **The Gardens of Aedena** will be new.material that will debut simultaneously here and in France and **Upon a Star** will provide the basic links in a cycle that will eventually form a cohesive "Moebius Universe."

New translations will be done especially for these books, and, for the first time, Moebius himself will approve the work.

"Each edition will be painstakingly prepared to capture all of the adventure, the whimsy and the unique craftsmanship of the works," Archie said.

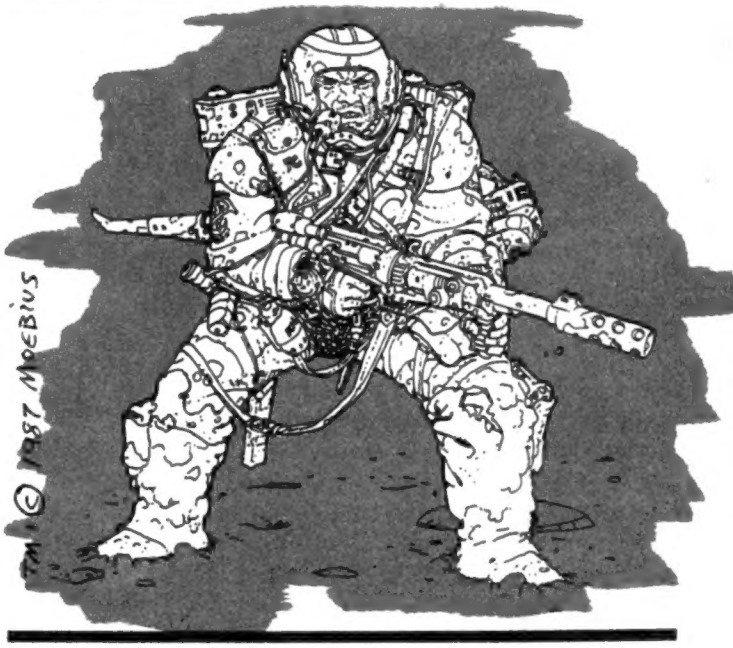
"To assure this, we're working every step of the way with Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier of Moebius' own company, STARWATCHER GRAPHICS," he added. "In addition to the already existing material, each book will include new material, a new cover and an interview with Moebius giving the author's personal view of his stories."

Internationally famous for his science fiction and fantasy comics and the long-running "Lieutenant Blueberry" western series, Giraud is also considered one of Europe's major fine artists. His original art has been exhibited in France, Italy, Belgium and the U.S. He was named "Best Artist in Graphic Arts" by French Minister of Culture Jack Lang and, in 1985, was decorated "Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres" (the highest French decoration for cultural and artistic achievement) by French President Francois Mitterand.

His involvement in motion pictures has included production design for the films ***Alien*** and ***TRON*** and art direction for the forthcoming production of ***Nemo***, a movie based on the comic strip character created by Winsor McCay. He is currently working with George Lucas and Ron Howard on a top secret film project.

Marvel will promote the series with an ambitious advertising and publicity campaign beginning with the American Booksellers Association Convention in Washington, D.C., over Memorial Day weekend. Moebius will be on hand to autograph copies of Upon a Star and will be in attendance at the Marvel booths.

"We're very excited to have the opportunity to launch a joint venture with a man of Moebius' talent and stature," Marvel Senior Vice-President Mike Hobson said. "I'm certain the end result will be something we will be proud of for many years to come."



the deluxe format it so richly deserves," Editor in Chief Diana Schutz remarked. "I have long been an admirer of his work, and am enjoying working with him on this project, particularly since he and I share the same aversion to typos!"

"Steacy and I could have gone anywhere with **Night and the Enemy**." Ellison said. "There were feelers and offers and promises and all kinds of the usual bull cookies. Blue sky and big bucks, arias of hot air from industry giants and industry pygmies.

"We went with Comico because no one—absolutely no one — puts together a prettier package," continued Ellison, "without censorship, and with the sense of true partnership."

Ellison is the author of 42 books, over 1,000 stories, essays, articles and newspaper columns, two dozen teleplays and a dozen motion pictures. Along with his multiple Hugo awards, he has won three Nebula awards, three Writer's Guild Awards for teleplays, the British Fantasy Award, the Edgar Allan Poe award of the Mystery Writers of America and the Silver Pen Award for his defense of the first amendment from the international journalism association, P.E.N. Among his credits are the classic episode of the ***Star Trek*** television series entitled "City on the Edge of Forever" and the major motion picture ***A Boy and His Dog***. He recently served as a screenwriter and creative consultant on the revived ***Twilight Zone*** television series.

Steacy's work should not be unfamiliar to Comico readers. He recently inked the Robotech graphic novel, for which he also painted the cover. He also served as penciller, inker and colorist for **Jonny Quest** #8, has contributed covers to numerous issues of Comico's Robotech series and will paint the cover for the upcoming **Robotech in 3-D** special.

"This is the most involved work I've ever produced," stated Steacy. "I'm very proud of the work. It's the most fun I've had without breaking any commandments. Even if it wasn't mine, I'd buy it."

Night and the Enemy will be printed on high quality paper in full-process color. It is scheduled for a 1987 release.

LETTERS

Send all comments & correspondence to:
LETTERS
COMICS FEATURE
8399 Topanga Cyn Blvd
Canoga Park, CA 91304

CENSORSHIP—ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

Dear Mr. Schuster,

IF Michael Correa is guilty of the crimes charged against him, then I DON'T sympathize with him. What's more, I believe they should lock him up and throw away the key, for attempting to destroy people's lives trough pornography..

I wouldn't snicker if I were you, because I have read, as of this letter, at least half of Donald Wildmon's book, **The Case Against Pornography**, which proves beyond all shadow of a doubt that all forms of "porno", including the seemingly innocuous **Playboy** and **Penthouse**, are extremely hazardous to mental health and physical well-being.

Bill Harms' talk of First Amendment rights is an absurdity, since porno is not protected by said amendment, as conceived by the Founding Fathers. There are also laws against libel, perjury, incitement to violence, divulging military secrets, advocating federal strikes, and fraudulent ads, among many others, all dealing with speech.

I also have firsthand experience with the deleterious effects of porn, "thanks" to my father's absorption in pornographic movies and books. He doesn't even believe in the existence of marital rape and thus, when my mother refuses to have sex with him, he flies into a rage and sometimes threatens to leave. In addition, he used to take nude photographs of my mother, and the day after my twelfth birthday, he masturbated me against my will, in order to show me the "joys" of self-stimulation.

I'm talking about a man who was raised in a Christian environment, so how could he have gained his perverse attitudes toward sex, except for the influence of the **Playboy** philosophy, which states that sex is the be-all and end-all of all life; to Hell with love and commitment! Take, take, take!

Regarding the Wonder Woman poster/cover Bill Harms mentions, my parents said it was inappropriate material for children to be exposed to (I'm 25) and I suppose that at least a few feminists would be against it, because it depicts women as slaves and sex objects. I wonder why Gloria Steinem, who served as a consultant in the creation of the new Wonder Woman, didn't object to the cover/poster?

Just because the Comics Code Authority approved the cover doesn't make it morally right. Anyway, I doubt the Comics Code Authority even exists. Case in point: the **Demon** mini-series. The Comics Code seal graced its first cover, when the book contained the word "bitch," but on the following covers, the seal failed to appear. Either the Authority failed to read the first issue, or the Authority doesn't exist, and DC Comics is in total control over what covers receive the seal. I've even asked the editor of **Amethyst** for the Authority's address, and received no response. There must be-a central office somewhere.

Bill Harms's reference to a possible ban of all comics, and/or total government control, is also ludicrous, unless all comics are pornographic, which they certainly are not. I should know; I buy enough of them, and more than a few are quite excellent, even some of the non-Code approved ones. (**Justice Machine, Spectre**, etc.) Thank you for your time.

PS: Please don't print my name and address. I wish to protect my father's anonymity.

COMMENTS, ANYONE?

Comics Consumer Guide

DC COMICS

5/12/87 Shipping

ADV. SUPERMAN ANN. #1
(STARLIN/JURGENS/MONTANO)
Superman faces a threat from the stars.

GREEN ARROW #2—
(GRELL)
(Of 3) (Direct Sales Only)

FIRESTORM #63—
(OSTRANDER/BROZOWSKI/GIORDANO)

FLASH #4—
(BARON/GUICE/MAHLSTEDT)

JUSTICE LEAGUE #5—
(GIFFEN&DEMATTEIS/MAGUIRE/GORDON)

THE OUTSIDERS #23
(BARR/?)(Direct Sales Only)

TALES TEEN TITANS #81
(WOLFMAN&BYRNE/BYRNE/GARCIA-LOPEZ)
(Reprints NTT Annual #2)

VIGILANTE #45—
(KUPPERBERG/SMITH/BURCHETT)
(Direct Sales Only)

WHO'S WHO UPDATE #2

WILD DOG #1—
(COLLINS/BEATTY/GIORDANO)
(OF 4) Midwest wuperhero takes on Mafia.

WONDER WOMAN #8—
(PEREZ&WEIN/PEREZ/PATTERSON)
WW vs. Cheetah.

5/12/87 Shipping

BATMAN #411—
(COLLINS/COCKRUM/GIORDANO)

BLUE BEETLE #16—
(WEIN/ANDRU/BARRAS)

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ELECTRIC WARRIOR #17
(MOENCH/BAIKIE/JANKE)
(Direct sales only)

LEGION #38—
(LEVITZ/LAROCQUE/DECARLO)
(Superman crossover part 4 of 4)

LORDS ULTRAREALM SP.
(MOENCH/BRODERICK/GIORDANO)
(Direct sales only) (One-shot)

SECRET ORIGINS #18—
Original GL—Helfer&Thomas/Giffen&Freeman; Creeper—?

SILVERBLADE #1—
(BATES/COLAN/JANSON)
(Direct sales only) (Of 12)

STAR TREK #42—
(CARLIN/SUTTON/VILLAGRAN)

SUPERMAN #9—
(BYRNE/KESEL) Joker in Metropolis.

YOUNG ALL-STARS #4—
(THOMAS&THOMAS/MURRAY/JONES)
(Direct sales only) Enter the Tigress.

5/26/87 Shipping

ADV OF SUPERMAN #432
(WOLFMAN/ORDWAY/BEATTY)

BOOSTER GOLD #20—
(JURGENS) Rainbow Raider.

DR. FATE #3—
(DEMATTEIS/GIFFEN/HUNT)
(Direct sales only) (Of 4) A new Dr. Fate, guest-starring the Justice League and Phantom Stranger.

GL CORPS #216—
(ENGLEHART/GIBSON/FARMER)
(Conclusion 3-part story)

INFINITY, INC. #42—
(THOMAS&THOMAS/ARGONDEZZI/DEZUNIGA)
(Direct sales only) Sktyman captive.

NEW TEEN TITANS #35—
(WOLFMAN/BARRETO/TANGHAL)
(Direct sales only)

THE SHADOW #2—
(HELFER/SIENKIEWICZ)
(Direct sales only)

JL ANNUAL #1—
(GIFFEN&DEMATTEIS/WILLINGHAM)

SWAMP THING #64—
(MOORE/BISSETTE, VEITCH& TOTLEBEN)
(Direct sales only) ST & Abby reunite. Alan Moore's last issue.

WARLORD #121—
(FLEISHER/THIBERT/MARCOS)

6/2/87 Shipping

ACTION #592—
(BYRNE/GIORDANO)
(Part 1 oaf 2) Big Barda in Metropolis.

CAPTAIN ATOM #7—
(BATES/BRODERICK/SMITH)

CENTURIONS #4—
(ROZAKIS/HECK/VEY)
(LAST ISSUE)

DETECTIVE #57—
(BARR/MCFARLANE)
Batman:Year Two, part 4 of 4

HAWKMAN #34—
(MISHKIN/HOWELLGARZON)

MASK #8—
(FLEISHER/SWAN/SCHAFFENBERGER)

THE QUESTION #8—
(O'NEIL/COWAN/MAGYAR)
(Direct sales only)

FLASH ANNUAL #1—
(BARON/GUICE/MAHLSTEDT)

SPECTRE #6—
(MOENCH/COLANMITCHELL)
(Direct sales only)

SUICIDE SQUAD #5—
(OSTRANDER/MCDONNELL/LEWIS)

TALES LEGION #351—
(LEVITZ/LAROCQUE/DECARLO)
Reprints Legion #26.

TEEN TITANS SPOT #14—
(REAVES/WOCH) Nightwing.

MARVEL

4/14/87 Shipping

DAREDEVIL #246—
(OWSLEY/?)

NEW MUTANTS #55—
(L. SIMONSON/BLEVINS/AUSTIN)
Intro new member: Bird Boy.

NIGHT MASK #11—
(THOMAS&THOMAS/BAGLEY/DEZUNIGA)
Conclusion of 3 part story.

PSI FORCE #11—
(FINGEROTH/HALL/TEXEIRA)

STRIKEFORCE #10—
(GILLIS/PORTACIO/WILLIAMS)
End of Black Watch.

WEB SPIDER-MAN #30—
(OWSLEY/GEIGER/NICHOLS)
Origin Rose.

W. COAST AVENGERS #24—
(ENGLEHART/MILGROM/MACHLAN)
Follow-up to *Lost in Time.* **CONAN THE KING #42—**
(KRAAR/DOCHERTY/BATOR)

NEW MUTANTS ANN #3—
(CLAREMONT/DAVIS/NEARY)
Impossible Man versus Warlock.

5/12/87 Shipping

SPIDER-MAN #292—
(MICHELINIE/ROMITA JR./LAYTON)
Leads into annual.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #333
(GRUENWALD/WIACEEK/ZECK)

FALLEN ANGELS #6—
(DUFFY/STATON/MAYERIK)
(Of 8) Background on Ariel.

KICKERS, INC. #11—
(ZIMMERMAN/ALEXANDER/DEZUNIGA)

MERC #11—
(MURRAY/MORROW/ZECK)

STRANGE TALES #6—
DR. STRANGE:Gillis/Shoemaker/Emberlin
CLOAK7DAGGER:Mantlo/Blevins/Wiacek

HEADMASTERS #2—
(BUDIANSKY/SPRINGER/AKIN&GARVEY) (OF 4)

ALPHA FLIGHT #50—
(MANTLO/BRIGMAN/PORTACIO)
Double-size followup to last years' X-Men/Alpha Flight features deaprture of Northstar, Aurora and Puck as new team consists of Vindicator, the new Box, the new Sasquatch, the Purple Girl and Manekin.

W. COAST AVENGERS ANN #2—
(ENGLEHART/MILGROM)
Ties in with Avengers Ann and Silver Surfer.

SPIDER-MAN DIGEST #5—
Reprints Spider-Man #'s 65,66,67.

SAVAGE SWORD #139
(DIXON/KWAPISZ/CHAN)

MOEBIUS: UPON A STAR

5/19/87 Shipping

MARVEL AGE #54—

AVENGERS #283—
(STERN/J. BUSCEMA/PALMER)
Part 3 of 5 in Olympian Gods saga.

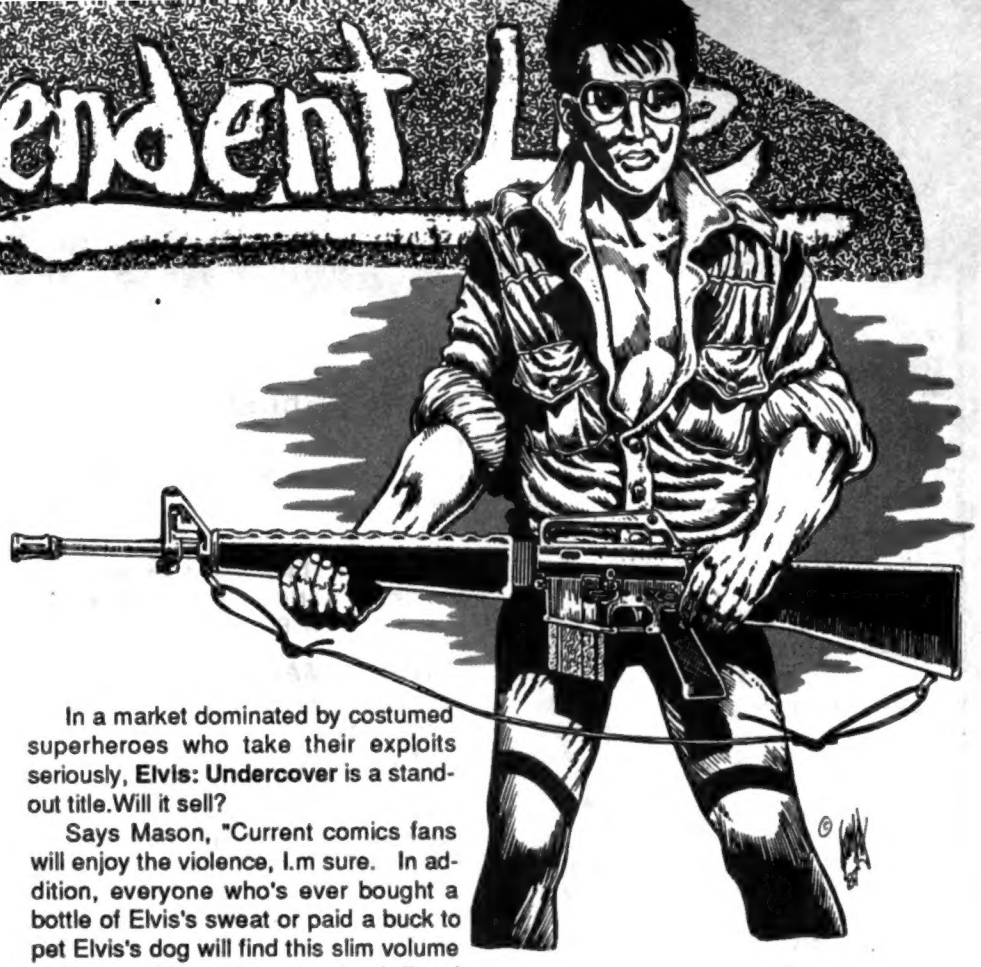
D.P. 7 #11—
(GRUENWALD/RYAN)

HULK #335—
(DAVID/RIDGEWAY)

MARVEL TALES #203—
(CLAREMONT/BYRNE/HUNT)
Reprints Marvel Team-Up #67.

SILVER SURFER #3—
(ENGLEHART/ROGERS/RUBINSTEIN)
Ties in with both coasts Avengers annuals.

Independent L



Crime, Cocaine, and The King of Rock and Roll

HOLLYWOOD, CA—In December of 1970, President Richard Nixon declared Elvis Presley an undercover narcotics agent for the Department of Justice, complete with official ID and badge. This is true.

What happened next is anybody's guess, but scriptwriter Tom Mason and comics artist Don Lomax will present their version this summer in a one-shot comic book titled Elvis: Undercover.

Elvis: Undercover will be published by Hollywood's only comic book publisher, Mad Dog Graphics. It will be a 32-page, black-and-white comic retailing for $2.00 and sold primarily through comic book shops, though, according to Mad Dog publisher Jan Strnad, "We're very interested in anyone who could provide distribution to the places **Elvis: Undercover** should really reach—record stores and newsstands."

While the story premise—Elvis's status as an undercover narcotics agent—is true, the busts, shoot-outs and general mayhem portrayed in **Elvis: Undercover** are strictly satirical.

For the author of **Elvis: Undercover**, scriptwriting is a new sideline to a professional cartooning career. Writer Tom Mason has previously sold over 550 cartoons to various publications, including the pinnacles of the cartoon world, **Playboy** and **Cosmopolitan. Undercover** is Mason's first script, but he is already at work on another satirical one-shot for Mad Dog Graphics, the title of which, according to Mason, "Is such a natural for the comics world, I'm keeping the lid on until the project.is well underway."

Mason is also editor of a humor anthology comic for Mad Dog Graphics, the bi-monthly **SPLAT!. Undercover** will be billed as "a **SPLAT!** special."

Elvis: Undercover is being illustrated by comics artist Don Lomax. Lomax, a Hoosier, has credits throughout the magazine and comics industry and is a frequent contributor to **CARtoons**, a longstanding comics title from Petersen Publications.

In a market dominated by costumed superheroes who take their exploits seriously, **Elvis: Undercover** is a standout title.Will it sell?

Says Mason, "Current comics fans will enjoy the violence, I.m sure. In addition, everyone who's ever bought a bottle of Elvis's sweat or paid a buck to pet Elvis's dog will find this slim volume indispensible. It's chock full of .Elvisisms.. No Elvis collection is complete without it."

Elvis: Undercover will be available in August 1987.

NEW JUDGE DREDD FILM

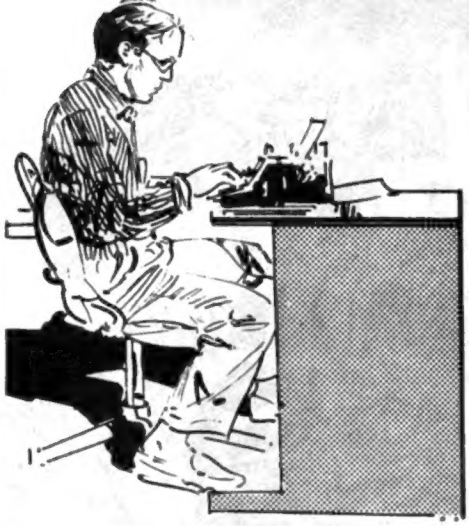
Hollywood — Charles Lippincott and Edward R. Pressman have formed a partnership to produce ***Judge Dredd,*** a futuristic action/adventure movie based on the exploits of the 21st-century law enforcer from the most influential British comic weekly, **2000 A.D.**.

Judge Dredd, which is published as a comic book in the U.S., is also published as a weekly comic strip in England and Australia. Judge Dredd chronicles the bizarre and forceful world of a tough but honest "super-cop" as he exercises the powers of policeman,judge, jury and (sometimes) executioner to keep the citizens of a gigantic American metropolis from perishing in a plague of rampant crime.

Judge Dredd will be produced by Edward R. Pressman and Charles Lippincott from a screenplay written by Jan Strnad, author of **Dalgoda**, and head of Mad Dog Graphics.

Judge Dredd recently celebrated its lOth anniversary in print. In February of 1977, Judge Dredd made his first appearance in the second issue of **2000 A.D.** Over the years it has been an important launching pad for the careers of such writers and artists as John Wagner, Mike McMahon and Brian Bollan

Edward R. Pressman's most recent fantasy/adventure production, ***Masters of the Universe***, starring Dolph Lundgren and Frank Lange, is scheduled for release this summer. He was also responsible for John Milius' ***Conan the Barbarian***, as well as the early Brian DePalma films ***Phantom of the Paradise*** and ***Sisters***. Other films Pressman has produced or executive produced include Terence Malick's ***Badlands***, Fred Schepisi's ***Plenty***, Wolfgang Peterson's ***Das Boot*** and David Byrne's ***True Stories***. Charles Lippincott previously served as Vice President of Marketing and Merchandising for Star Wars Corp., a predecessor of Lucas-Films, until forming his own company, Creative Movie Marketing, to consult on ***Alien***.



WORDSMITH

Wordsmith is a unique comic book. Published by Deni Loubert's Renegade Press, the comic book is not only quite different from mainstream comic books, but there is simply no other comic book with the same flavor. It is about the life of a pulp ficittion writer in the 1930s. Pulp writing in the '30s was a time that has never been seen before and has never been quite duplicated since. There were literally scores of adventure magazines published then and it was not uncommon for a writer to produce at least one million words a year. In fact they almost had to turn out hundreds of thousands of words of stories of jungle adventurers, aviation aces, semi-costumed crimefighters and all sorts of other men of action.

The Wordsmith is just such a writer. He struggles to meet his deadlines, to make sure that he is paid by his editors and to create the images that he needs to excite the reader. He writes in a variety of different fields and under a multitude of pen names. His life is a constant balance between the real world that he has to deal with and the many fantasy realms that he has to imagine to survive. Similarly the comic book is a combination of scenes from the pulp stories that the Wordsmith is writing and the actual incidents that confront the Wordsmith himself. The different types of action interweave in and out of each other in truly dazzling fashion.

Dave Darrigo understands his characters very well indeed and also seems to possess a firm grasp of the realities of working as a writer in perhaps the least honored medium during the depression. Pulps were an odd combination, scorned by the intellectual elite and yet almost a necessity of life to the lower middle class that faced a daily dismal struggle of unemployment and discouraging jobs. The cycle of despair would only be broken by the advent of the Secopnd World War and the new prosperity that followed in its wake. And that would also bring about the demise of the pulp as a literary form.

Darrigo not only understands his character and the world that he must live in, but also the very stories that Wordsmith pens as well. Darrigo is quite obviously a fan of this type of fiction and has read it in its many forms. As if to underline this point and also to provide the readers with the sense of security that his author knows his subject, there is a text page by Darrigo in each issue, a page on which Darrigo provides a mini-primer to the original pulp magazines.

The visuals are provided by Rick Taylor who has obviously studied the time period in which the stories are set. The style of art work and the choice of images combine to create a true and necessary period flavor. The reader is led to feel that he is a part of these bygone days even though most of the readership will almost surely have been born after these events were long past. Taylor is capable of varying his motifs and , in subtle ways, even his art style to create different effects. As he switches between scenes from the stories that the Wordsmith is writing back and forth to the actual world of the Worldsmith himself, there are carefully orchestrated variations in the appearance of the panel and of the elements within the panel. Even when Darrigo switches between the different types of stories that the Wordsmith pens, from westerns to jungle adventure to detective, Taylor varies his art to match.

Almost any of the pages of this book are rife with cliches, but this is deliberate. A type of shorthand is used to create an immediate impression of the type of story being told. Western scenes have the white and black hats, jungle scenes the savage animals and beautiful women in disterssa, detective stories the expected cliches. This is true of the art and also of the writing. Each line evokes a particular genre and style of writing that was common to the pulp days. The writer and artist have carefully planned this use of cliches because of the underlying subject matter of the series.

R. Taylor

O GROO#31—
O ELFQUEST #26
O DRAGONRING #6—
O ELFLORD #9—
O G.I. JOE IN 3-D #1—
O CAPTAIN ELECTRON #2—
O FATHOM #1—
O JONNY QUEST #12
O ROBOTECH MASTERS #16—
O STAR BLAZERS #2—
O GRENDEL #9—
O JONNY QUEST CLASSICS #2—
O JUSTICE MACHINE #6—
O RIO GRAPHIC NOVEL—
O ROBOTECH: NEW GEN. #16—
O ELEMENTALS #14—
O FATHOM #2—
O JONNY QUEST #13—
O ROBOTECH: MACROSS #20—
O STAR BLAZERS #3—
O EARLY DAYS KNIGHTS #3—
O LARS OF MARS 3-D #1—
O TALES OF TERROR #12—
O SCOUT #19—
O CAPT. EO 3-D SPECIAL—
O AIRBOY #21—
O KAMUI #1—
O LOST PLANET #1—
O MAI, THE PSYCHIC GIRL #1—
O MR. MONSTER'S SCHLOCK #2—
O VALKYRIE #1—
O NEW WAVE VS. VOLUNTEERS 3-D
O AIRBOY #22—
O MIRACLEMAN #12—
O AREA 88 #1—
O ESPERS #6—
O VILLAINS & VIGILANTES #4—
O FUTURIANS GRAPHIC NOVEL—
O THUN'DA TALES #1—
O SURVIVORS BOOK ONE—
O SURVIVORS BOOK TWO—
O LONE WOLF AND CUB #1—
O NEXUS #36—
O BADGER #27—
O EVANGELINE #3—
O GRIMJACK #38—
O DREADSTAR #32—
O AMERICAN FLAGG #44—
O DYNAMO JOE #11—
O JON SABLE, FREELANCE #51—
O HAWKMOON #1—
O CHRONICLES CORUM #5—
O CHROME #6—
O HOT SHOTS #2—
O RALPH SNART #8—
O DAI KAMIKAZE #1—
O SILVERWING GRAPHIC NOVEL—
O STREETFIGHTER #4—
O 3-D ZONE #4—

THE FOLLOWING ARE BLACK AND WHITE MAGAZINES OF VARYING QUALITY, FROM EXCELLENT TO PITIFUL.

O PUMA BLUES #7
O CEREBUS #98
O A.C.E. COMICS PRESENTS #3
O ADV SPENCER SPOOK #8
O BIG EDSEL BAND #2
O FANTASTIC ADVENTURES #2
O JUDO JOE #2
O ON TOP OF OLYMPUS TRADE PB
O DICK TRACY MONTHLY #13
O NERVOUS REX #11
O FIGMENTS #3
O BORIS THE BEAR #10
O CONCRETE #2
O DARK HORSE PRESENTS #7
O GODZILLA SPECIAL #1
O TREKKER #1
O ZOT! #13
O JOURNEY: WARDRUMS #1
O ALIEN FIRE #3
O SPIRIT #31
O TEENAGE TURTLES #4
O TALES OF TEENAGE TURTLES #1
O MEGATON #8
O BURIED TREASURES #3
O JACK KIRBY'S HEROES
O MS. TREE #39
O WORDSMITH #9
O CORBO #2
O NINJA #6
O RIP IN TIME #5

NOTE: THE ABOVE TITLES ARE THE VERY BEST BEING PUBLISHED AND ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED BY HAPPY HAL. FIND THEM, BUY THEM...READ THEM. IF A BOOK IS NOT LISTED IT COULD MEAN ONE OF THREE THINGS, EITHER I HAVE NOT SEEN IT, IT HAS HAD NO PREVIOUS ISSUES, OR IT SIMPLY ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO MAKE THE LIST!

MORE BOOKS:
ICARUS #1
MAELSTROM #1
SAMURAI #18
STARK FUTURE #11
UNDERGROUND
WARLOCK 5 #7
THE REALM #8
SYSTEM SEVEN #2
BLACKTHORNE'S 3 IN 1 #4
BRIK HAUSS #1
FIGMENTS #3
JAX #4
LABOR FORCE #7
LAFFIN' GAS #9
MIDNITE #4
NERVOUS REX #11
OF MYTH AND MEN #WOLF #1
WOLF #1
TIME TRAVELLING THIEVES #3
SOUTHERN KNIGHTS #20
CZAR CHASM #2
BLACK BELT HAMSETERS #6
FUSION #3
STIG'S INFERNO #8
BLADE OF SHURIKEN #1
CARNAGE #1
G.I. MUTANTS #1
THE MIGHTY MITES VOL.2#1
NAZRAT #6
REIGN OF DRAGONLORD #4
CRITTERS #16
DOG BOY #5
PARTICLE DREAMS #5
SINNER #1
WANDERING STARS #1
RAMM #1
WILDMAN #1
EB'NN #7
ULTRA KLUTZ #11
AMUSING STORIES #2
FRENCH ICE #3
FRIENDS #1
KAFKA #2
LOVE FANTASY #1
STRATA #6
TROLLLORDS #7

FURTHER NOTE:
As you can tell with this list, we are gradually initiating our policy of not listing the titles of publishers that do not send us copies of their titles. While there are still a few publishers that are not sending us their books that we have listed this time, simply because someone in the office reads them anyway, that will stop in the near future. Please assure yourself a listing by sending us copies of your publications, there are simply too many to keep track of which ones actually release the books they promise without your assistance. Thank you for your cooperation. The additional space alloted by this reduction in titles listed will be utilized to give better coverage to those we do list and to provide our readers with recommendations as to which books are most worth their seeking out.

'NAM TRADE PAPERBACK (MURRAYGOLDENBEATTY)
Reprints First Patrol, Dustoff, Three-Day Pass and Six O'Clock News.

5/26/87 Shipping

FANTASTIC FOUR #306— (ENGLEHART/J. BUSCEMA/ SINNOTT)
Guest stars Inhumans and Diablo.

IRON MAN #222— (MICHELINIE/BRIGHT/LAYTON)

THE 'NAM #10— (MURRAY/GOLDEN/BEATTY)
In Saigon during a terrorist attack.

PETER PARKER #130— (LAYTON/FERN/COLLETTA)
The Owl, The Lizard, Hobgoblin, Kingpin....

SPITFIRE #12— (KAMINSKY/SALTARE/FERN)

STARBRAND #9— (BATES/GIFFEN)
Guest starring Nightmask.

THOR #383— (DEFALCO/FRENZBREEDING)

X-MEN #221— (CLAREMONT/SILVESTRI/GREEN)

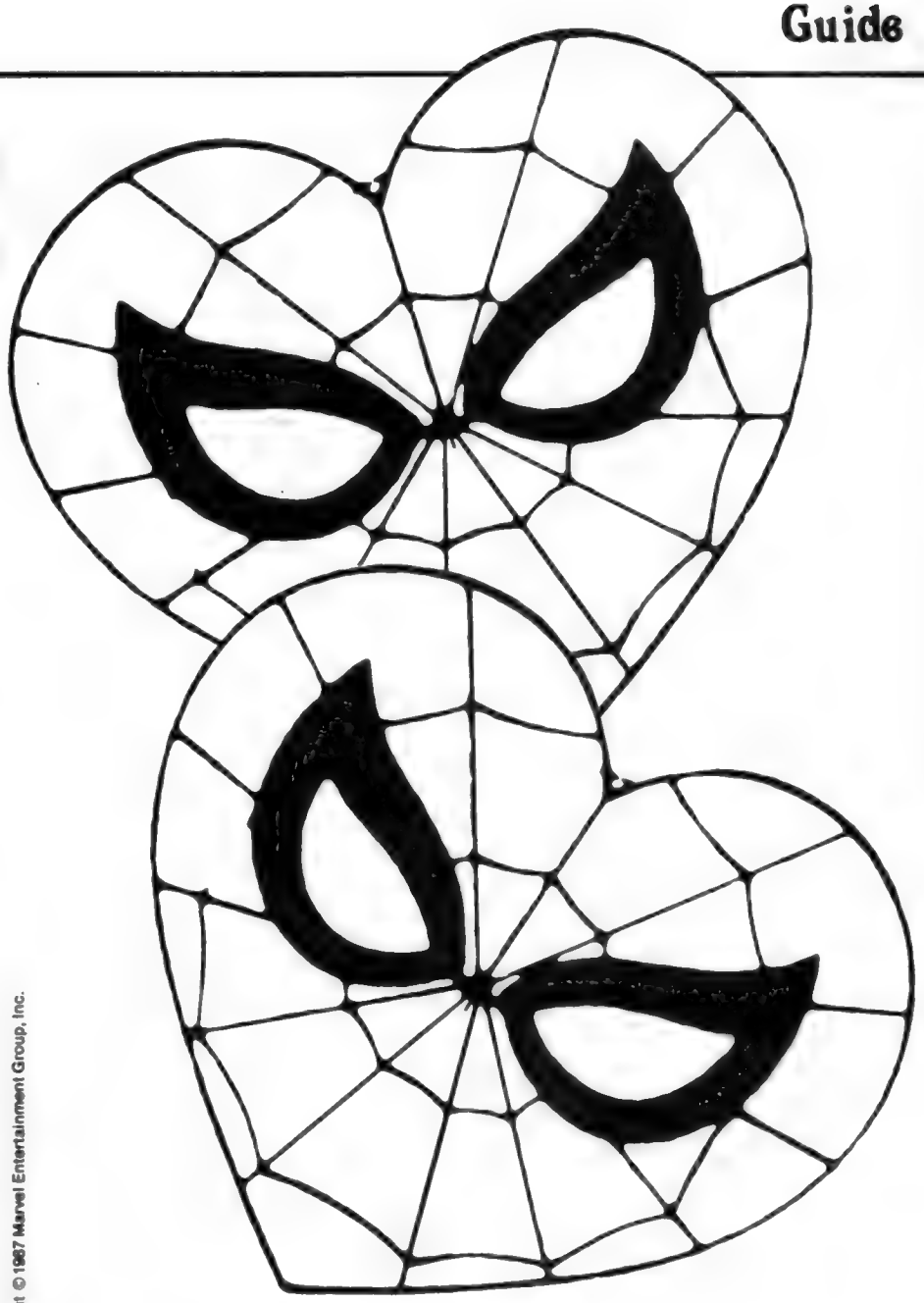
CONAN #198— (OWSLEY/SEMEIKS/ISHERWOOD)

G.I. JOE #63— (HAMA/WAGNER/ZECK)

MARVEL SAGA #22—
History of Peter Parker/MJ relationship. Intros by Lee and Shooter.

FF ANNUAL #20— (ENGLEHART/?)
Return of Doctor Doom.

SPIDER-MAN ANN #21— (MICHELINIE/S. BUSCEMA/ COLLETTA)
Spidey wedding!



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X-FACTOR #20— (L. SIMONSON/S. BUSCEMA/ WIACEK)

CLASSIC X-MEN #13— (CLAREMONT/COCKRUM/LAYTON PLUS CLAREMONT/BOLTON)

TRANSFORMERS #32— (BUDIANSKY/PERLIN/ AKIN&GARVEY)

TRANSFORMERS DIGEST #5—
Reprints #'s 9 and 10.

CONAN SAGA #4—

X-MEN INDEX #3—

MARVEL UNIV HNDBK #5

VILLAINS™

BY JAMES VAN HISE

DOCTOR DOOM

Continuing the chronicle of the monarch of Latveria

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A clash of armour...

Heavy hangs the crown on the head of the armored monarch of Latveria, Victor Von Doom. Doom rules over his kingdom and sees to the needs of his people even as he plots world domination. As he puts it in **Fantastic Four** #84 ("The Name Is Doom"), "Do I not give them shelter...provide them with food? And all that I ask is total, blind obedience!" This story runs through issue #87 and portrays just what Doom's relationship is with his people. The kingdom of Dr. Doom is an autonomous state recognizing no treaties and no international law. When the Fantastic Four learn from SHIELD that Dr. Doom has a dangerous project in the works, they volunteer to go to Latveria. They know they will be captured, but only then can they discover the secrets.

Doom is at his worst. When a servant looks glum, Doom threatens him, saying, "You know the penalty for looking disconteneted!!" He commands that a festival be held to welcome the Fantastic Four. It reminds one of the Village in **The Prisoner**. When Reed attempts to pierce this charade by running for the border to show what will happen, an automatic sentry device is activated from which Doom proclaims, "Nobody *ever* leaves Latveria. You will remain here...and be eternally happy!

It becomes evident that Dr. Doom's secret project is an army of warlike robots which continue fighting even when they are smashed to pieces. But Doom has made them so violent that they pass beyond his control. Doom has deliberately built in a flaw which only he knows of — but which Reed Richards is able to figure out. One of Doom's aides confronts Richards in the castle art gallery and attacks him with a powerful flame-throwing device. Doom is so furious at the interference in his plan that he uses hyper-sound to kill his aide. Doom then announces that he has wearied ofthe game and allows the FF to leave.

This strange story portrays Doom as a ruthless dictator. He's clearly not a man who is kind to his people while an enemy of the world. The depiction is only missing a scene showing that Doom has a young girl shackled in his bed chamber.

MORE ENCOUNTERS

In **Sub-Mariner** #20 (Dec. 1969), Namor is offered sanctuary at the Latverian embassy to escape armed soldiers. When he encounters Dr. Doom, Namor expresses suspicion. He once allied himself with the monarch only to be betrayed. When reminded of his treachery, Doom casually remarks, "Ancient History, Namor...and undeserving of memory!" Since Namor's entrance into the embassy was witnessed by many, Doom's ambassador protests that if the monarch keeps the Sub-Mariner, there will be international ramifications. Doom is furious at being questioned. He threatens to retire his ambassador to an unmarked grave if

HOW DARE YOU WEIGH THE PAINS OF HELL AGAINST THE WRATH OF DOOM?
CALM DOWN, BEN! THERE MUST BE A REASON BEHIND THE SURFER'S ACTIONS--AND I'D LIKE TO HEAR IT!
THANK YOU, MY... FRIENDS. MY REASON HAS ITS BEGINNINGS SHORTLY AFTER I PARTED COMPANY WITH--THE DEFENDERS--!
BAH! I'VE HEARD ENOUGH OF YOUR SELF-LAMENTING DIATRIBES, SURFER!

he fails to carry out orders without question. Doom attempts to force Namor to put the armies of Atlantis under his control. When the Sub-Mariner refuses, Doom attempts to beat him into submission. Namor escapes and Doom finds that he has once more outsmarted himself.

In **Thor** #182 & 183, Don Blake learns that Doom is holding a French scientist prisoner, forcing him to design missile silos. Blake plants the story that he's discovered a miraculous new plastic surgery technique to lure Doom to New York. There Blake is kidnapped and taken to Doom's castle. Once in the castle, Blake finds the scientist. Changing to Thor, he destroys much of Doom's many armaments. When Thor goes to free the scientist, he learns that the scientist was never held prisoner but was promised great wealth. His daughter means nothing to him. He is so furious at Thor's interference that he tries shooting him. When Thor spins his uru hammer to deflect the shells, the scientist is killed by a ricochet.

Captain America #321 (Dec. '70) grants Doom an uncharacteristically small role. He is challenged by Modok to create an android Bucky Barnes that would fool even Captain America. Doom accepts the challenge to his ego and succeeds. He infuses the android with so many memories of Cap that at the crucial moment, it refuses to kill him.

In **Astonishing Tales** #1-8, (1970-71), Dr. Doom is featured in his own regular series, although he shares the title with the adventures of Ka-Zar. Here we witness a day in the life of Dr. Doom. We also learn what happens when he creates an android with a mind of its own, and observe his battles with The Red Skull (who tries to invade Latveria) and The Black Panther (when Doom attempts to steal some vibranium).

STRANGEST ENCOUNTER

Perhaps the strangest encounter between Doom and the Fantastic Four takes place in the Nov. '71 issue. When Reed, Ben and Johnny are defeated by a being calling himself the Overmind, Sue convinces Doom that it's in his interests not to let the Overmind remain triumphant. Doom and Sue go to Reed's Baxter Building Laboratory where he completes a device started begun by Mr. Fantastic. The machine turns the Overmind's mental bolts back on him. It is The Stranger who finally detects the Overmind's power and ends his menace. Doom is battered but unbowed, vowing that when next they meet it will be as enemies. This story, showing Doom fighting alongside the FF, captures a sense of Doom's grandeur we seldom glimpse. Others will be inspired by this elusive and seldom portrayed quality in years to come.

The Monarch of Menace is true to his word. When he next meets the FF, it is as their bitterest enemy. In FF #142-144, Doom captures the Thing using a being called Darkoth, the Death Demon and then lures the FF into a potentialy fatal rendezvous. Never has Doom appeared more triumphant than on the last page of FF #142. Doom plans to unleash a Vibration Bombwhich will destroy all of humanity's emotional ties, leaving them open to a new loyalty to Dr. Doom. Doom deploys the bomb which starts taking effect as it orbits the Earth. Then it's destroyed before it can be fully brought into play. A similar device is used with *complete success* in the 1987 **Avengers** graphic novel.

Sub-Mariner #47-49 once more unites Namor With Doom — a Doom who regrets his previous treachery towards one who can be a powerful ally. This time Doom's goal is to steal the Cosmic Cube from AIM. He doesn't seek world domination but to make his hideously scarred face human again. He hopes to end his nightmare of hatred and iniquity. In the end he decides that, sadly, he is fated for some higher purpose.

NAMOR & DOOM

Super-Villain Team-Up #1-15 is largely a series of alliances and battles between Doom and Namor. Doom is his most ruthless, even murdering a harmless jester who mocks him in issue #3. The Fantastic Four turn up in a couple issues; even Henry Kissinger puts in an appearance. The Red Skull engages in a battle with Doom on the surface of the Moon. Doom's alliance with Namor ends in issue #13 when he helps the Sub-Mariner regain his Atlantean throne. Bill Mantlo's script offers an interesting glimpse into Doom as he departs Atlantis when Doom thinks, "I thought you and I much alike, Sub-Mariner. I was wrong! Though monarchs we both be, with the power to change the course of history — mine is a power derived from strength! From an iron will! While yours stems from your people! Their trust in you! Their faith! Their love! I do not understand such strength, Namor! But I cannot deny its...power!" The art in this issue, by Keith Giffen, is the best of this short-lived series. Giffen does a fine Kirby imitation, but then this protean artist has displayed many styles in recent years.

In **Marvel Team-Up** #42-44, Dr. Doom is captured by Dark Rider and used as a source of mystic power because of Doom's witch's ancestry. Doom is freed by Spider-Man and The Vision so that they can combine forces to defeat the Dark Rider.

Dr. Doom makes the Fantastic Four's life less than pleasant in issues 155-157. Then he seemingly imprisons the Silver Surfer's beloved Shalla-Bal and wipes her memory. He offers to return her to the Surfer, her memory intact, if the Surfer slays the FF. The woman is not really the Surfer's beloved, just a lookalike found by Doom. Or so Doom believes. Actually, it *is* Shalla-Bal. She had been a prisoner of Mephisto who was banished by him to Latveria and given new memories. If you thought it was convenient that someone living in Latveria happened to look like Shalla-Bal, there is a very good reason — not that Doom realized it.

Avengers 155 & 156 (which feature great Jack Kirby covers and fine George Perez interiors) continue from **Super Villain Team-Up** #9 and are just a lot of fistfights.

In **Master of Kung Fu** #59 and 60 Dr. Doom and his super-computer The Master Planner play a game on Shang-Chi. He is pitted against deadly adversaries who turn out to be robots. Finally Shang-Chi traces everything back to Latveria where he battles Dr. Doom in person,but even Doom is a robot! Doom has the final laugh and makes sure that Shang-Chi knows it.

THE REIGN OF ZORBA

Doom kidnaps the FF (in **Fantastic Four** #196-200) so that he can duplicate their powers in the body of his son. His son?

I'VE BEEN BIDING MY TIME UNTIL NOW! TONIGHT, I RECLAIM THE FIRST GEM... TOMORROW, THE SECOND! WITH TWO IN MY POWER, I CAN EASILY LOCATE THE REST...

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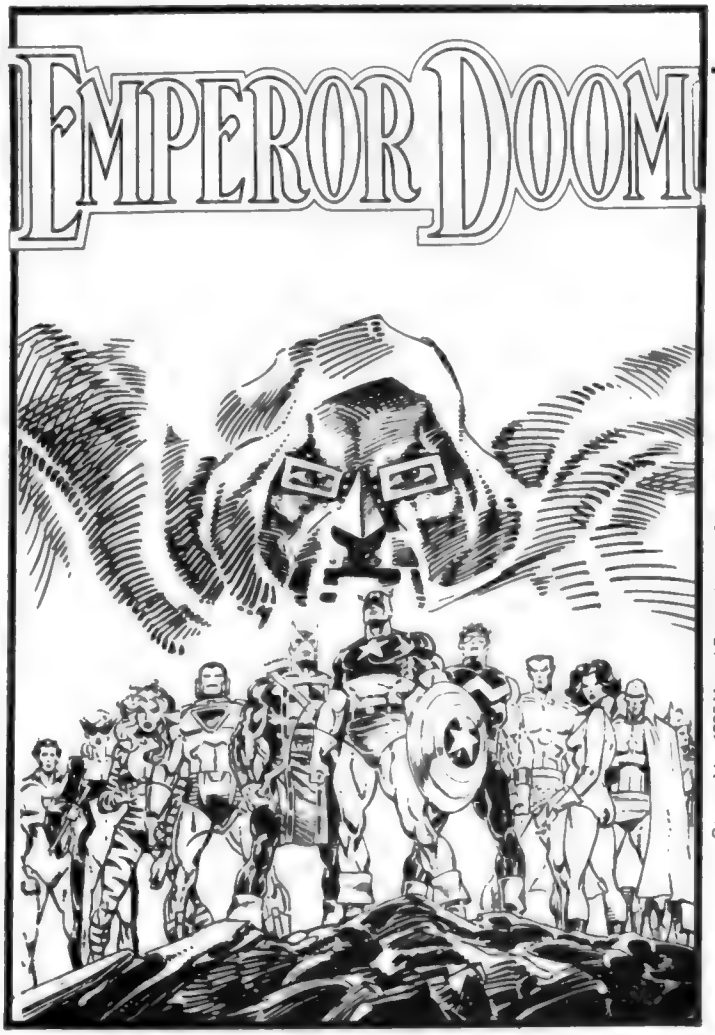
Well, actually it's a clone who turns on Doom. Doom is driven to kill him, which leads to Doom and Reed Richards' ultimate battle. Von Doom tries to kill Richards and demands that he admit that he tampered with the machine which destroyed his face. Richards refuses to lie and Doom refuses to admit that it was his own mistake that led to the accident. Finally Richards wrests Doom's mask off and the huge crystal Doom is under reflects the damaged face back at him hundreds of times over, driving him insane. Doom is put in a straightjacket and Zorba, a relative of the deposed king, takes the throne, ending Doom's tyranny.

From the upcoming graphic novel....



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When Zorba institutes the reforms necessary to running the country, resentment broods, particularly over taxes. This resentment gives birth to rebellion and a plot to return Doom to power. Doom's comatose body is stolen and replaced with a robot. Under the direction of the very loyal Boris, Doom's armor is taken and used to help to stimulate the mind of Doom, bringing him out of his coma. Returned to consciousness, Doom wastes no time driving Zorba to retreat, but has yet to regain his throne.

It all appeared as a backup feature in **Fantastic Four Annual** #15. (1980).

THE JEWELS OF DOOM

Remember those jewels that Doom sent the Fantastic Four back in time after way back in FF #5? Well, he's been trying to track them down in this century and succeeds in finding one. It enables him to detect another in a nearby dimension — the dimension ruled by Nightmare. Upon encountering Dazzler, who interferes with one of his schemes, he kidnaps her and forces her to try to secure the gem (in **Dazzler** #3 & #4).

When Doom takes Arcade prisoner after a bad decision is made by the Master of Murderworld, Miss Locke has family members of some of the X-Men kidnapped to force them to rescue Arcade from Doom. (Personally, I've always felt that Arcade is the silliest villain in the history of the X-Men. He seems to be a refuge from a 1950s DC comic, a time when silly villains proliferated. Dr. Doom would have done comicdom a favor by locking Arcade up in an Iron Maiden.) After three issues, Arcade is freed when he agrees to apologize to Doom. Doom also learns what it's like to underestimate the powers of Storm.

WITCHCRAFT

Ever fascinated by the arcane arts practiced by his late mother, Doom travels back in time to learn spells and mystical secrets from the master mage Cagliostro (in **Iron Man** #149 & 150). When Doom returns to his own time, he learns that a critical shipment of electronic components was intercepted and diverted by Iron Man. The message is conveyed to Doom by his assistant, Hauptman (brother of a man Doom slew in FF #85). Doom chooses to steal the components back, prompting Tony Stark to go to Latveria to search out Doom. When Iron Man shows up at Doom's castle, the deposed monarch refers to Iron Man as "Errand Boy" and shows no interest in what he has come for. Doom believes that since he paid for the components, they were illegally withheld from him. This despite the fact that as a terrorist, Doom is restricted from buying certain types of American technology. Iron Man engages Doom in battle. While distracted, they wind up handing the time cube to Hauptman who turns it on sending them both back in time. He believes Doom will be stranded forever.

Doom seeks out Morgana Le Fey and confesses that his own pursuits in the dark arts have been an attempt to free his mother's soul from damnation. This he attempts each Mid-Summer's Eve. She agrees to help Doom if he will help her slay King Arthur (in whose castle Iron Man is staying as he tries to figure a way out of this dilemma). Doom leads an army of the undead raised by Morgana. When Iron Man defeats Morgana, she flees to another dimension ruining Doom's plan. He vows vengeance against Iron Man but calls a temporary truce. Only by combining components from their armor can they hope to create a warp field capable of returning them to their own time. Doom is impressed by Iron Man's knowledge and Stark is in turn fascinated by Doom's intuitive grasp of electronics. The device they create works, but Doom states that while he shall keep his promised truce, they will meet again as enemies one day.

This story is the perfect example of how Doom can be used to his fullest potential. The story takes advantage of

his unique characteristics. Dr. Doom places these two issues of **Iron Man** among the best in the history of the series. They capitalize on every facet of Doom, his menace and his scientific genius. They also show a Doom who explores the secrets of the mystic arts.

Spider-Man Annual #14 once more shows Doom indulging in mystical experiments. This time it is an inter-dimensional liaison with Dormammu. Where the experiment would have led is not determined as Doom's catspaw, the Toad, becomes drunk with the power given him by Dormammu. He captures Dr. Strange. Only the intervention of Spider-Man saves the day.

BACK TO LATVERIA

Some of the most interesting stories pitting Dr. Doom against his old adversaries the Fantastic Four take place during the tenure of John Byrne on the FF. In issue 236 he kidnaps the FF and brainwashes them into believing that they are normal people. The battle ends when Doom is trapped in suspended animation (in issue 237) but he escapes (in issue 246) and demonstrates his testiness when he strangles his own ambassador (although this turns out to be a robot programmed with Doom's own ruthless responses). The robots rescue Doom's body from suspension.

A devastated Latveria has come under Zorba's rule in issue 246. In 247, we see that Zorba has been driven to mad extremes to attempt to control the unrest in Latveria. When Doom and the FF finallly defeat his forces, Doom himself deals with the threat of Zorba, and is once more monarch of Latveria.

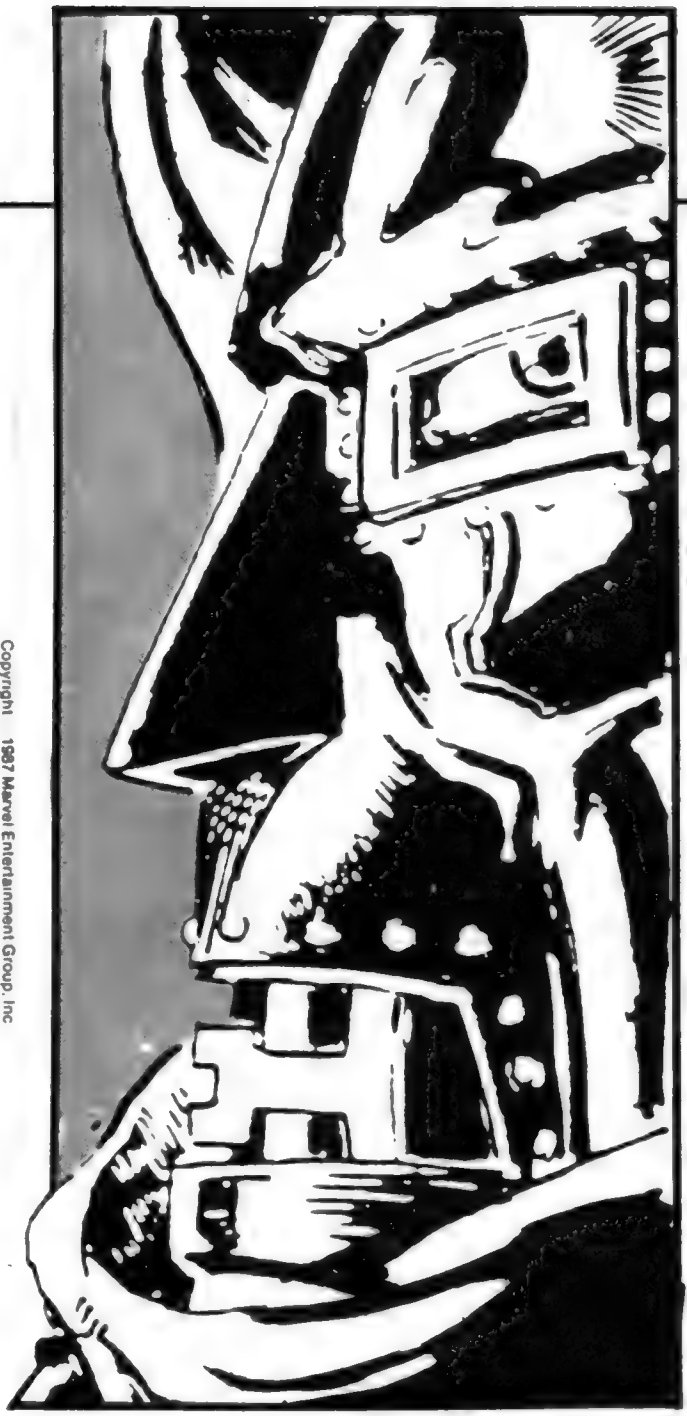
Before Doom was rescued by his robots, he attempted to rule from the tiny robot body his mind was trapped in in FF #236. He was defeated by the combined forces of the Micronauts and the Puppet Master (in **Micronauts #41**). That's why he was so miffed when he was finally freed.

Dr. Doom continues his war against the FF in issues 258-260, 268, 278, 279, 287 & 288. In 288, Doom faces the Beyonder, whom he had also come up against in **Secret Wars** 1-12.

In **Dr. Strange** #57 (Feb. '83), we see a Dr. Doom that has regained his throne and is rebuilding Latveria. He learns that Dr. Strange is without a disciple at that time and muses that he must come day meet this Dr. Strange to see who is really the master of the mystic arts. This one page hint is all that we have seen of this so far. The right writer could make much of that future encounter.

Recently other characters have encountered Doom, including Cloak and Dagger in the ten issues of their title.

One of the interesting uses of Doom is in **What If? #22** — "What If Dr. Doom Had Become A Hero?" It shows a very different life for Victor Von Doom changing with the moment when Reed Richards tells a young Doom that his



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calculations are wrong. The experiment doesn't fail and Doom's face is not scarred in an explosion.

And, of course, now we have the Avengers graphic novel in which Dr. Doom conquers the world — and finds that it's not as much to his liking as he expects it would be. In fact, it becomes tedious. This is a very important story in the chronicles of Doom. We finally see just what would happen had any of those past master plans come to pass. Certainly it will give the monarch much to consider in the future. But then what would the Marvel Universe be if it didn't have Dr. Doom to contend with? **CF**

JAMES VAN HISE is the former editor of one of the oldest fanzines in the comic book field, author of The Art of Al Williamson and editor of Monsterland.

FUN & PROFIT™

BY MIKE BENTON

IF THIS BE ONE

"I always buy the first issue of every comic title. That way I always have the most valuable issue of the run," a collector in a comic book store told me.

The owner of the store said to me: "The guy's right—at least I know that I sell about two to three times as many #1 issues of a title as I do the #2 or #3 issues."

Another comic book retailer confirmed the popularity of first issues in his chain of five stores: "I find that I usually end up only ordering about 1/3 to 1/2 half as many second issues as I do first issues of a title. The orders for third issues run about 1/4 to 1/3 the sales of a #1, with a rapid drop-off after that."

Why does everybody — retailers, distributors and collectors — buy so heavily of first issues?

"For one thing," a distributor told me, "just about everybody wants to give a new comic a fair try. Most people pick up a #1 issue just to make sure that they're not missing something. If they don't like it, then they don't buy any more. No mystery about it."

Perhaps — perhaps not. The real mystery is who even reads those #1 issues. Typically, more #1 issues are bought and sold than there are actual readers for the book.

The rest of many first issues go into stockrooms and speculators' boxes. They are hoarded.

Today, many a comic book is launched just to cash in on the strength of the built-in first issue sales. After all, as the distributor said, everybody's willing to take a chance on anything once.

The seemingly inexhaustible need of collectors to have all #1 issues is also responsible for the explosion of black and white comic book titles in the specialty comic store market. Any comic book, be it black and white or color, good or bad, will sell 5,000 copies or more of any #1 issue.

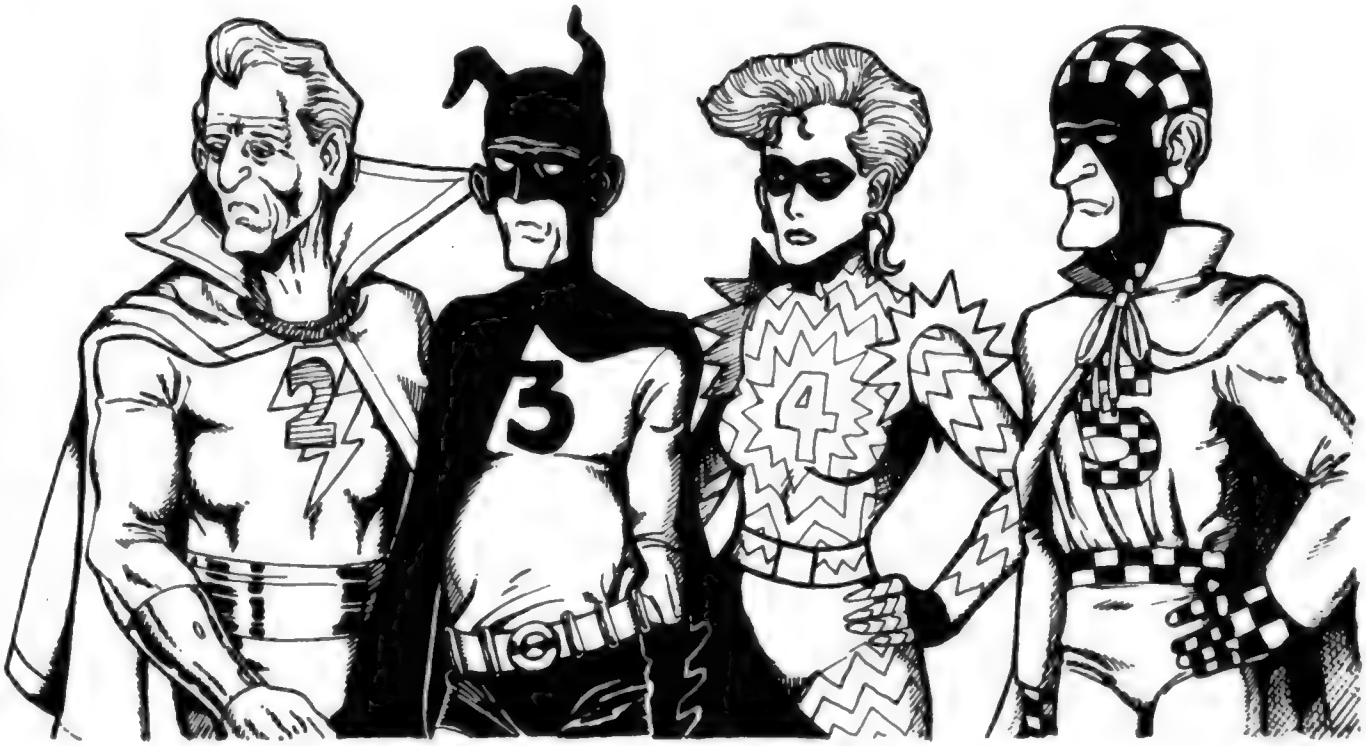
As a result, many #1 boks are printed that simply do not have the strength or potential to warrant a second or third issue.

The passion for #1 issues among collectors has also greatly contributed to the number of limited series. After all, since most fo the sales occur in the first three or four issues, why not end the title, and start a new one?

There are indeed some collectors who only collect first issues. These "#1 Collectors" buy every new comic title, and seem much more interested in the issue number of a comic than its contents.

More than a particular collecting mania, however, the true impetus behind this drive to own and possess #1 issues is simply good ol' greed.

Number one issues have achieved a mythical reputation



as the most valuable books to have. This reputation derives a good deal of support from the past, when #1 issues of comics in the 1940s through the early 1960s were indeed scarce.

By the late 1960s, however, the very popularity of #1 issues started to gradually undermine their investment potential.

In a nutshell, everyone began buying #1 issues of comic titles in large amounts in anticipation of huge demand. Because of the very fact that #1 issues remained in big supply due to the speculation in them, they have deflated in value.

Still, collectors continue to speculate heavily on #1 issues, and store owners overbuy first issues as well. The only reason #1 issues achieve any premium value at all over a second or third issue is because of a perception between buyer and seller that #1s are somehow more scarce, more valuable and desirable than any other numbers.

Consider this fact: The most valuable issues of the limited Frank Miller title, **Ronin**, are the *last three* issues of the six part series. Everyone speculated heavily on issues 1 through 3, but ignored the later issues. Now issue #6 is worth more than #1.

Still, there will still be doubters among you, and both collectors and dealers will continue to buy more #1 issues than they need.

For some hard facts on first issues and their relative value in the marketplace, let's look at all the #1 issues that came out in an eight month period, from March through Novembr of 1986.

The list on the following page lists the 119 #1 issues that came out during that time. That works out to almost a new #1 issue every other day of the week!

Don't be surprised if you don't recognize a lot of the titles on the list — most were independent and limited distribution titles. Many never saw a second issue.

Clearly, there is an explosion of first issues that are aimed at getting the collector's dollar.

Now let's look at which of these #1 issues actually achieved a significant dollar value, based on a real market demand.

Out of all those #1 issues, only the following have shown a very strong collector interest:

Airboy
Classic X-Men
Electra: Assassin
Grendel
Jonny Quest
Man of Steel
'Nam
Superman
Watchmen

My own feelings about the list are that three of the titles (**Superman**, **Man of Steel** and **Classic X-Men**) were bought in such large quantities that they will only grow slowly in value. I do believe that there are truly three or four significant and highly collectible #1 issues from this list.

Watchmen #1 will achieve a respectable value, but it too was bought in too large a quantity to ever become really scarce.

Of all the Marvel and DC #1 titles from this list, probably **'Nam** has the best chance to shoot up in value. The other non-Marvel and DC titles on this short list could yet hold the greatest potential for appreciation.

The majority of the other books on the larger list, however, are only worth slightly more (or less!) than their original cover price.

The point is this: there are many more worthless #1 issues than worthwhile ones. By all means, try out new books, but don't fall prey to the false investment mentality that follows first issues.

. . . . . .

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

In an effort to clear off my desk, let's turn the rest of this column over to answer some questions that have been piling up:

(1) I like collecting comics, but I can't find any plastic bags to put them in. What can I buy to store my comics in?

I know collectors with over 15,000 comic books in their collections, but not one plastic bag. Instead, they make sure that they store their comics in a safe and controlled environment, away from damaging influences.

This is an important point for beginning collectors to realize: It is far more important to store your comics in the right *environment* than it is to buy bags and boxes for them.

If you place your books in a dark, dry and cool environment, away from insects, humidity and temperature changes, they you do not need a single bag or box.

Bags are nice if you handle your comics extensively, offer them for sale, or loan them to read. Otherwise, pay more attention to *where* your comics are kept than *what* they are kept in.

(2) I've got 9,000 comic books, and I have to move to another apartment? Help!

I assume that one of the reasons you're moving is to get an extra bedroom for your collection, right?

Moving a collection is a tricky business, and almost every collector will do it at least once in his or her life.

First, before you move, get your collection in order. This means filing and sorting all those stacks of read and unread comics that you let pile up.

Put all your books in order, and then take inventory. Check to see if you turned up any duplicates when you filed your books. A major sort operation often turns up a few duplicates or unwanted books. Put these aside.

Now take a critical eye at what's left. Is it time to prune away some old titles or sell a few books?

Be very careful at this stage. You may be tempted to dump your collection just so you don't have to move it. Don't do it.

When you sell under duress or a moving deadline, you're likely to accept too little for your books. Wait until you're settled in for a major sell-out, if indeed you still want to.

You should, however, turn the trash books and unwanted duplicates into some moving money, and then begin the packing process.

First, pack your collection separately from all of your other possessions. Don't, for example, mix your **X-Men** with your bathroom stuff when you move, or you may accidentally shampoo away a hundred bucks.

Before you pack your books into boxes, either wrap the books or line the box with plastic. You may put the books in plastic bags or wrap plastic trash bags around them.

The plastic is important because it protects your books from water damage, which can occur all too often in a major move.

Before you move the collection, have a safe place to store them in your new place. Closets are fine, but wherever you choose, make certain that it will be out of the way of the moving in activity.

Finally, move your collection separately from your other possessions. If possible, make a separate trip for your comics or put them in a separate area when moving. Whatever you do, make sure that furniture and other boxes are not likely to be set upon them or slide into them.

One last suggestion: make sure that you have a fresh stack of comics to read when you finally settle in at your new place — you'll feel right at home!

(3) My mother tells me I have too many comic books. I tell her I don't have nearly enough. Here's what I want to know: Is there such a thing as having too many comics?

Of course there is — you obviously have far too many and you should immediately send them all to me. I don't have nearly enough, either.

Yet there really is a serious answer to your question. The size of your collection is related to your purpose in collecting.

For example, do you only collect comics that you want to read, enjoy and re-read all your life? If so, then your collection should only be as big as your capacity to enjoy it.

Consider this: Suppose you read five comics a day, at the most. Suppose that you like to re-read your books about once a year, on the average. This means that after you have 1,825 comics (which is 5 comics times 365 days a year), you have all the comics you can read in a year's time.

The point is: Why have a collection so large you cannot read or appreciate all the books in it? Some collectors can read and appreciate 20,000 comics; others can make do with 200.

On the other hand, if you collect comics for research or scholarship, or if you're actively building a reference library of comic material, then you should accumulate all the books you can catalog and study. Be aware that with such an extensive collection, however comes the responsibility to protect it and dispose of it properly when the time comes.

Finally, if you're buying for investment or commercial resale, then the size of your collection is only limited by your ability to manage it.

One collector in my local area purchased 100,000 comics at 3 cents each. He has no desire to keep or even read most of the books. He has an extra garage with a climate controlled environment, and he's keeping the books for eventual resale.

So, yes, there is a magical optimal size for a comic collection — but only you (and not your mom!) know what it is.

(4) I think making oney from comic books is a big gyp. All my friends say they have books that are worth $10 or $20, but they never get money for them. They just trade them around. So what's the deal?

Rule Numero Uno: A comic collector only makes money when he *sells* a comic — not when he buys it or trades it.

The biggest mistake collectors make is that they think they will automatically get "X Dollars" for a comic just because they see it sell for that price somewhere.

You don't cash in a comic like a savings bond or check. You *sell* a comic to someone and get their money.

If you know how to sell comics, you can make money with comic books. If you don't know how to sell comics, or if you have never sold anything in your life, you probably won't make much or any money in comics.

Most collectors end up taking their comics back to the store they bought them from when they want to sell. The store owner only pays the price that allows *him* to make money — not necessarily you.

If you are actively buying comics only to make money, then be sure you take a quick course in selling them as well.

(5) Whenever I go to a comic book shop or a convention with my friend Eric, he always asks for discounts on back issue books he buys. How much should I try to get dealers to take off the price of their books?

Before you start to bargain for your comics, do realize that a discount is not always to be expected or will ever be offered by some dealers.

Collectors that continually chirp "How low will you go? How low will you go?" to a dealer do indeed run the risk of being slapped upside the head.

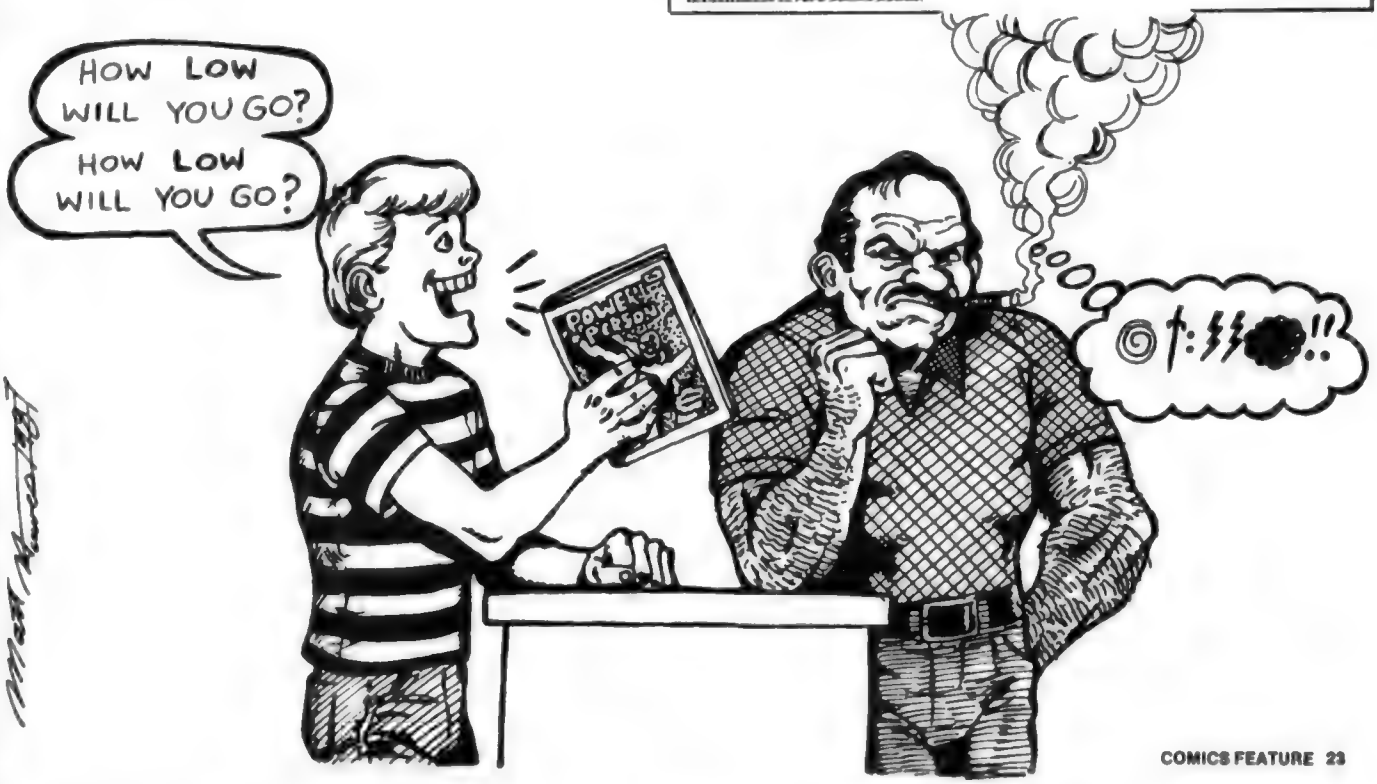
You may make a *counter* offer to any dealer. When it comes to back issue comics, you can name your price. Don't be surprised or hurt, however, if the dealer politely refuses your named price or laughs in your face.

On the other hand, he probably will accept a cash offer of 10% to 30% less on many books. He may even sell you a quantity of slow-moving books at a 50% discount.

It all depends on how many books you're buying and how much in demand they are.

One final word of advice: Don't go on a fishing expedition. That is, negotiate a reduced price only if you are interested and *capable* of buying a book. **CF**

MIKE BENTON is the author of Comic Book Collecting for Fun and Profit and a leading expert on investments in rare comic books.



NUMBER ONE ISSUES
(PUBLISHED FROM MARCH THROUGH NOVEMBER 1986)
Salome
Sam Slade
Samuree
Saturday Knights
Seadragon
Steel Claw
Steelgrip Starkley
Streetfighter
Carcajou
Chrome
Chronicles Of Corum
Terraformers
Terranauts
Time Warriors
Flesh and Bones
A Fitch In Tim
Against Black
Airboy
GI Robot
Grendel
Grimjack
Twilight Av
Valor Thun
Vector
Venture
Espers
Eternity
Popples
Luger
Wayfarers
Syphons
Justice Machine
Judge Dredd
Crossfire & Rainbow
Code Name Tomahawk
Little Shoppe of Horrors
Spitfire & Troubleshooters
Star Brand
Justice
Animax
D.P. 7
Amethyst Special
Electra: Assassin
Evangeline
Psi Force
Night Mask
Official JLA Index
Merc
Demon
Kickers Inc.
Last Days of JSA Special
Strikeforce: Moritun
Son of Ambush Bug
Fantastic Four Vs. X-Men
Incredible Hulk & Wolverine
Classic X-Men
History of DC Universe
Official Crisis Index
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Spider-Man Vs. Wolverine
Matt Haw 1987

Twilight Avenger
Valor Thunderstar
Vector
Venture
Espers
Eternity
Hero Alliance
New Wave
Hugga Bunch
Watchmen
Labryinth
Ironwolf
Whodunnit?
Spellbinders
Dynamo Joe Special
World of Wood
Power Station
Anything Goes
Rogue Trooper
Kol Manique
Zooniverse
March Hare
Alpha Flight Annual
Transformers Universe
GI Joe and Transformers
GI Joe Digest
GI Joe Missions
GI Joe Universe
Ghostbusters
Elementals Special
Captain Electron
Inhumanoids
Mr. Monsters
True Crime
Comet Man
Defenders Of Earth
Mr. Monsters
Hi-Octane Horror
Chuck Norris
Karate Kommandos
Angel Love
Jonny Quest
Mask
Mephisto Vs. Four Heroes
'Nam
Hawkman
Madballs
Roots of Swampthing
West Coast
Avengers Annual
Honeymooners
John Bryne
Classics
Cosmic Boy
Question
Teen Titans
Spotlight
Legends
X-Factor Annual
Captain Atom
Man of Steel
Superman
Wonder Woman
Super Powers
X-Men
Howard The Duck

THE SILVER SURFER SOARS AGAIN

"Somewhere in the deep vastness of outer space, an incredible figure hurtles through the cosmos! A being whom we shall call the Silver Surfer, for want of a better name! The Silver Surfer, zooming along the starways like a living comet—with the freedom and wild abandon of the wind itself! On and on he soars, dodging meteors—skirting around asteroids—rocketing from planet to planet—with entire galaxies as his ports of call—with the known universe itself as his highway."

BY JAMES VAN HISE

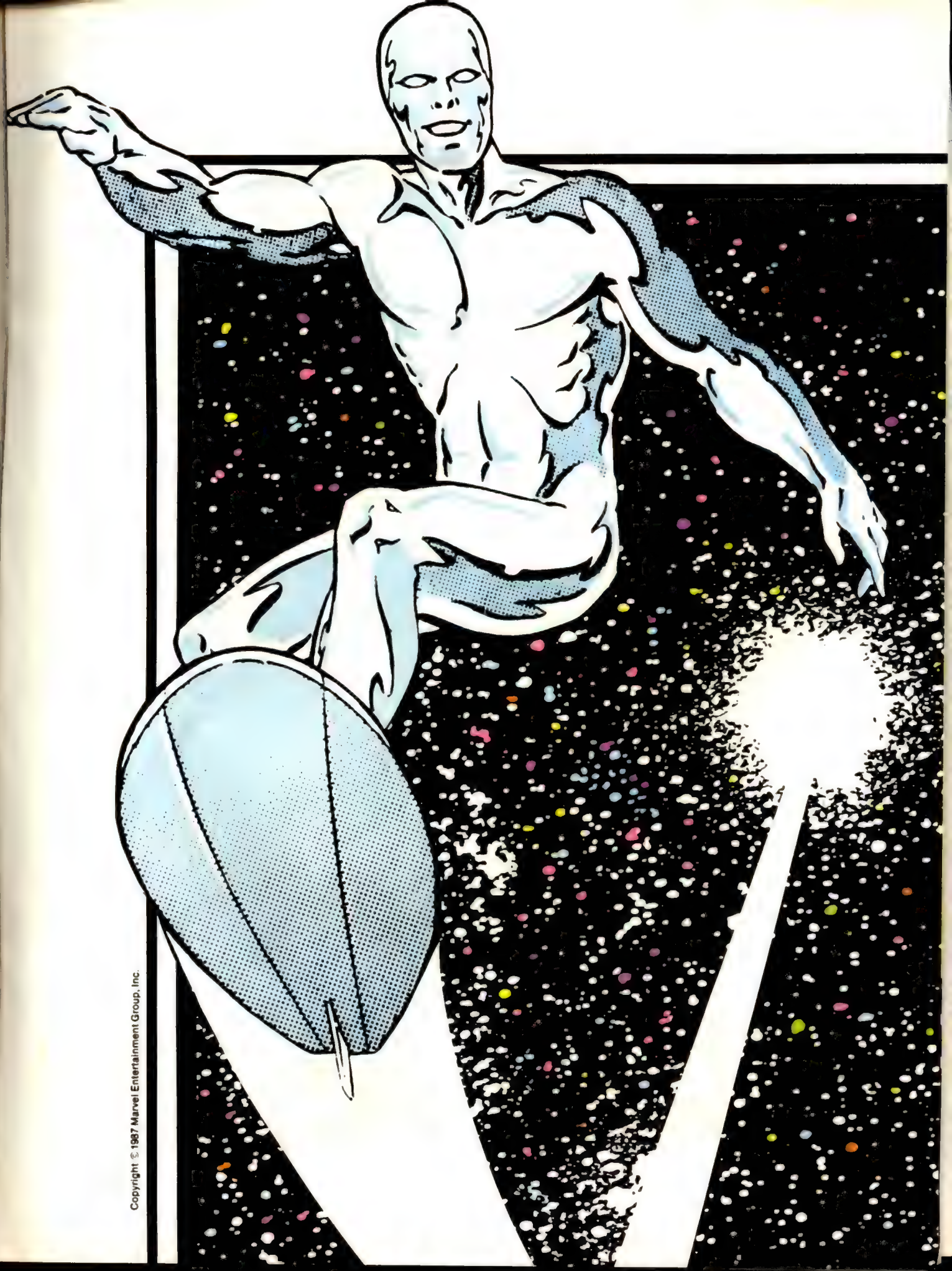
Those ringing words marked the very first appearance of the Sentinel of the Spaceways, the Silver Surfer, way back in **Fantastic Four** #48 in those long-gone days of March, 1966. That was over twenty years ago and the book only lasted eighteen issues. But over those issues, running from 1968 until 1970, the Surfer made a deep impression on his readers, particularly those who were passing through a stage in their lives when they too felt outcast from society. For the Surfer closely reflected the feeling of alienation that was so prevalent among college-age youth at the height of the Vietnam War.

During his initial appearance, in **Fantastic Four** #'s 48 to 50, the herald of Galactus learned about human compassion and sensitivity from Alicia Masters. This caused him to re-evaluate his role in helping the almost god-like Galactus to find living planets to consume. When he challenged Galactus, the Surfer knew he must undertake a losing battle—all of his own cosmic power was merely a gift from his master, a master who could withdraw that gift at any time. When Galactus chose to spare the Surfer's life, he did so at the cost of the herald's star-spanning powers, leaving the powerful being trapped on Earth.

A PRISONER OF THE EARTH

While exiled to the Earth and prevented from returning to his beloved spaceways, the Surfer learned much of man's inhumanity to his fellow man, and to any other being. He learned that man was a creature of honor and compassion and of hatred and petty bigotry. This made him all the more bitter at his imprisonment. How could he survive trapped on this one world when he had previously flown across entire galaxies with no more effort than a thought?

While on Earth, Norrin Rad (his real name was revealed in the first issue of his own magazine) soon encountered a diversity of residents of the Marvel Universe, everyone from the scheming Doctor Doom and Mephisto to his comrades in the Defenders, from Dracula to the Sub-Mariner, played a part in his life. Then he lost his series. In the past 17 years, despite the fact that he almost was the star of a feature film, the Surfer remained a perennial guest at a party who had no place to call home. The reason for this odd state of affairs was a combination of both accident and design. While he certainly merited a series of his own, the man who wanted to write it was too busy to handle the job. Stan Lee had far too many corporate responsibilities to resume charting the adventures of his brainchild, and yet he didn't want to relinquish him to any other scribe. Finally Lee realized that the character would never realize his potential unless he allowed another to tell the tales.



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THE NEW CREATIVE TEAM

The writer to whom Stan Lee has passed the torch of his literary brainchild is Steve Englehart. "Of all the characters that Stan Lee and Jack Kirby created back at the beginning of Marvel, the Surfer was the only one that Stan really wanted to keep a handle on when he moved out to Los Angeles and became the head of Marvel Productions," Englehart explains. "I think he failed to realize that when he went off to L.A. he wouldn't be able to keep doing the Surfer on a regular basis due to his other commitments. So the Surfer has just appeared here and there for the past 15 years, usually as a guest star, and then only with Stan's permission. When he did come out in his own stories, Stan wrote them.

"When I came back to Marvel in '84, I was given a list of characters that they would like to have series done on," Englehart continues, "and one of those on the list was the Surfer. I said, 'Gee, isn't this Stan's character?' They said that they weren't able to do anything with him if the Surfer was left entirely to Stan. So we talked to Stan about wanting to do a series. I just happened to show up at the right time." That was the beginning, but a very complicated series of events would follow before the Surfer would be back in print.

"At that point it was going to be a 12-issue limited series taking place right before a graphic album that Stan and Keith Pollard were doing which would have gotten the Surfer off of the Earth. My 12-part series with John Buscema would have been the last 12 adventures of the Surfer on Earth. There were a lot of editorial snafus with New York and by the time they were ironed out it was decided that we wouldn't be able to get the series out before the graphic album. Then it was switched to a 12-part limited series taking place after the graphic album. John Buscema got upset by the delays and went off to do **The Avengers** and **The Fantastic Four**."

In the meantime, Marshall Rogers and Englehart watched their plans for a Batman series for DC fall apart. By that time Marvel had decided that the Surfer graphic novel by Lee and Pollard would probably never be completed.

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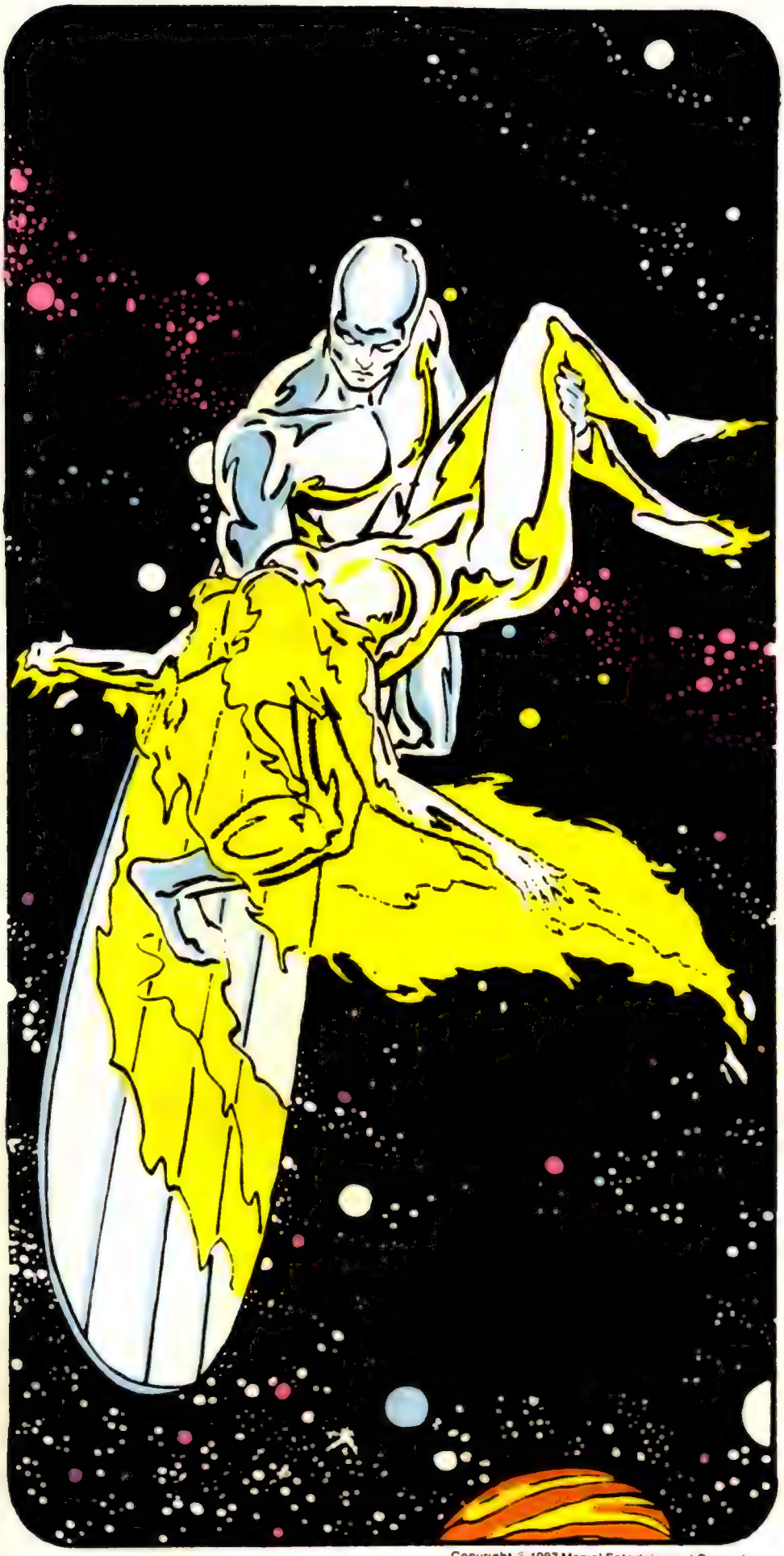

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"All of a sudden I was doing an unlimited series in which I could get the Surfer off the Earth," Englehart explains, "which was a much better position to be working from. Getting the Surfer off Earth is what everybody has been wanting to see for 20 years! I was very pleased about doing that myself and I came up with an explanation as to how it could be done."

The Surfer series came along just as Marshall Rogers completed the **Demon With A Glass Hand** graphic novel for DC and he wanted to try his hand at a regular series again.

"After being in and out of the mainstream for awhile I decided that it was time to get back on a regular project and stop moving around so frequently," Rogers says. "I looked at my available options and the Silver Surfer was the best one around. It gave me the chance to work with Steve again and so I've committed myself to Marvel for twelve months on this project. This will be a continuing book so we'll see what happens."

THE SURFER TAKES OFF

The series was originally scheduled to premiere for Christmas of '86, but then Marvel chose to delay the book so that they could get ahead of schedule. Many Marvel titles were on the verge of shipping late and they wanted to increase their margin of safety.

"The **Surfer** was *not* one which was running late," Englehart insists. "Because Marshall has had a reputation for having trouble with deadlines, I want to make it clear that it had nothing to do with Marshall or me. They were just going to puch it back to January and then I stuck in my two cents and said that as long as you're going to push it back, let's push it back to spring when sales are better."

Don't expect the same sort of stories that Stan Lee produced in the '60s though since Englehart plans to return to the Surfer that appeared in FF #48 for his model.

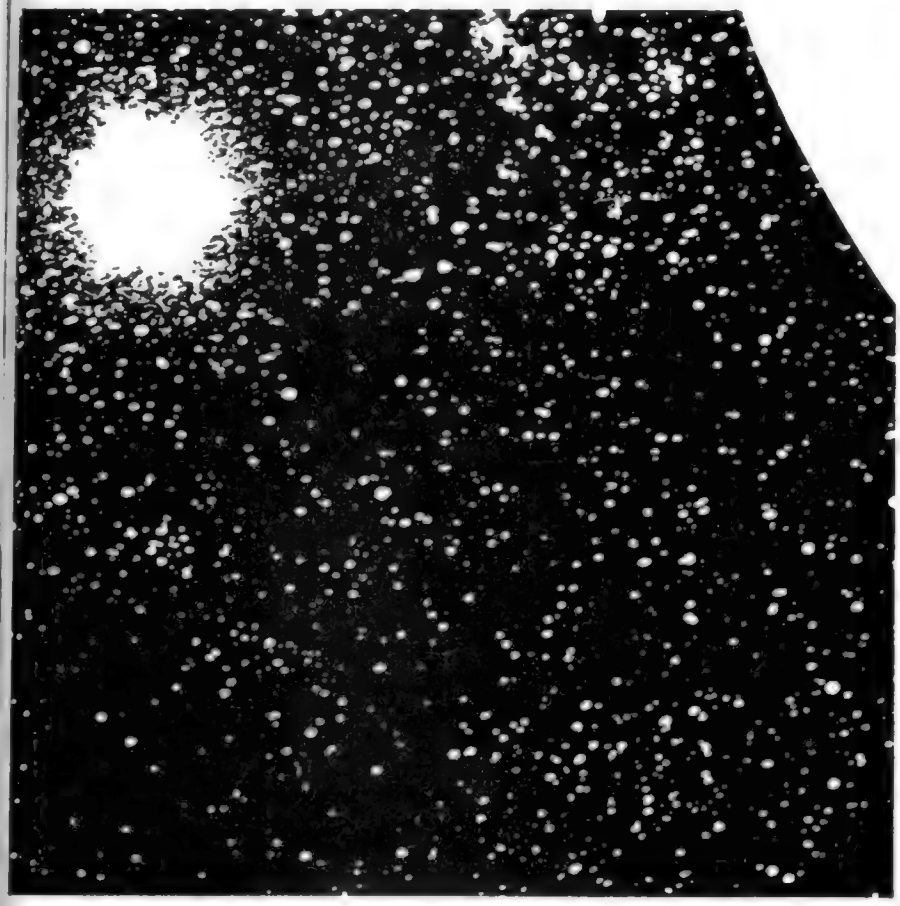
"I've found that the most interesting thing for me in writing him is that once he's off Earth, he's basically a different character. The guy that we've always seen was an aberration. The Surfer in space is what the Surfer is supposed to be; the Surfer trapped on Earth was a limited version of that character. We'd see flashes when he'd go into the microverse, but writing the guy on a day-to-day basis requires a lot of

rethinking. I'm reminded of when I did the Vision/Scarlet Witch series and the Vision had just been turned human by Roger Stern before I took it over. I was essentially writing a new Vision and it took me awhile because I was surprising myself every step of the way. It's the same thing with the Surfer because I have to figure what he would do next. I can't rely on what he has done because that's not the real Surfer in terms of character."

During the years that the Surfer was trapped on Earth, the writers who used him took great care not to do anything which would conflict with how the character had been established by Lee. "The down side of that," Englehart observes, "was that there were quite a number of stories with Shalla Bal, Mephisto and the Surfer with his head in his hands. People were trying to stay very close to one vision of the Surfer, and not change anything when Stan wasn't looking."

One example of how differently the Surfer will be portrayed now that he is free of the Earth will appear in an early issue of the new series.

"There's a sequence in the second issue where the Skrulls attack him with



NO, FOR MANY MONTHS NOW HE'S BEEN TRAPPED ON ONE WORLD AMONG THE BILLIONS--
--UNABLE TO LIVE AS HE WAS MEANT TO LIVE!
--TRAPPED LIKE A RAT--ON OUR WORLD OF EARTH!

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"Sort of a palladin, like the singular knight of old who roams around and finds himself saving damsels in distress...the knight on the shining surfboard...."—Marshall Rogers

this incredible weapon and he just turns around and wipes them out in a couple of panels. He says, 'You must be thinking of that guy who was trapped on Earth. I'm the Silver Surfer. I've got the power cosmic and I don't have to worry about using it anymore.' So he's much more powerful than we've ever seen him," Englehart states, "because he had to worry about blowing up Earth if he was going to really rear back before. By getting back into space and away from his concerns for humanity, we're getting him back more towards the alien intelligence that he was when he first showed up in the FF, such as with the blank eyes. Marshall's having a good time thinking him through. He's got a number of nice bits. Since there's no up and down in space, when he flies, quite often from our point of view he'd be flying upside down or in a spiral or any kind of this stuff. He's just going with the waves of energy. It's interesting to do this guy in space after all these years of his not being able to get there."

Rogers views the Surfer as, "sort of a palladin, like the singular knight of old who roams around and finds himself saving damsels in distress. He's sort of the knight on the shining surfboard," the artist observes. "I'm looking forward to seeing the scope of the magazine that the Surfer is getting. There's a lot of space to bring in the vastness of the cosmos, so to speak. There's a possibility of me exploring a lot of different worlds and being able to get into some different designs of alien worlds and atmospheres and not staying in earthbound situations."

"Marshall's Surfer is a distinctive one," Englehart observes, "but that's why we hired him. He really has a great sense of space. The great thing about the Lee/Buscema Silver Surfer series in the Sixties was that there were lots of four, three and one panel pages which really gave you a sense of grandeur, scope and space. The bad thing was that there were a lot of four, three and one panel pages so that you didn't get as much story per page as people were used to. That's a narrow viewpoint because they were getting this fabulous art in that big space. The Surfer needed that grandeur even when he was on Earth."

In the new series, Englehart is using fewer panels to tell an effective full-length story of the Surfer in space. "There's lots of room to really feel like

the Surfer is in space. That's one of the things I'm really pushing—the Surfer as this unfettered, flying being. At the same time we really tried to tell an interesting and complete story. I couldn't see doing the Surfer in the standard six panels per page motif. It would reduce him to a mortal level."

DESTINATION INFINITY

The new space-faring sagas of the Silver Surfer will confront him with different adversaries then he encountered during his forced tenure on Earth. The Surfer's Earthbound conflicts are largely history.

"Frankly, I'm sick of Mephisto," Englehart admits. "He was an interesting counterpoint to the Surfer when he first appeared, but now that he's been around twenty times with variations on the same plot, he's uninteresting. I don't plan for Mephisto to show up in this series for quite awhile. He'll have to show up eventually because he's the only major Surfer villain. Everything we know about the Surfer is at least semi-inoperative now so his major villain when he was trapped on Earth doesn't have much to do with what he's doing out in the cosmos."

Shalla Bal was always the Surfer's great love. She's dealt with in the second issue of the new series.

"I don't really want to say what happens there but he and she don't get themselves a little vine-covered cottage down the lane and settle down for the rest of their lives. If there's any romantic interest at all (and right now it's a moot point), I've brought back Mantis. (A character that appeared frequently during Englehart's tenure on **The Avengers** some years ago.) She's a cosmic being now so she's more able than Shalla Bal to hang out with the Surfer. He's a very pure soul, not interested in, shall we say, cheap sex. Mantis, although cosmic, was, of course, a hooker in Saigon when she started out. She has no particular inhibitions about male/female relationships, while he does. They make an interesting pair. It's not clear yet how far this relationship will go, but it's fun in the going."

Where the Surfer *is* heading is into encounters with most of the space-faring characters in the Marvel Universe.

"I'm tilting the Surfer more towards space," Englehart states. "When I'm looking for villains and plotlines, I'm going for the classic Marvel space characters. In the first four issues, I've got the Elders of the Universe. We've only seen them briefly here and there but it's never been established what they are up to. I gave them something to do. We've also got Ego, the Living Planet, the Celestials, Skrulls, the Kree and Supreme Intelligence. I've made a list of all the various space characters available and started working out interconnections and plotlines. I've got this huge chart of all these people with lines drawn all over and I'm fairly quickly building towards an extremely large panoramic space epic. That's what this series is primarily about—space."

The space epic is slated to last the better part of the next year in order to work everything through with the Celestials, the Elders, the Eternals, the people of Titan and others.

"My driving goal at this point is the Surfer in space," Englehart asserts, "nailing down, in effect, a lot of Marvel space and real space, for that matter. It's been established that the Kree live near the Greater Magellanic Cloud and the Skrulls are in the Andromeda Galaxy, but all those things are real and have certain dimensions and visual motifs. My overriding concept of the Surfer is space. To me that means unfettered vastness. I'm shooting for a plot which reflects that as well as the visuals.

"I've really been playing a lot with the reality of space. Distances...sizes. I have a book called **Galaxies** which has state of the art photographs of actual nebulae and galaxies that are out there. I've been providing those to Marshall. We're trying to get space accurate for the first time, as far as I know, in comics. I do a lot of talking about how far it is from place to place and how cold it is in between and so forth to try to give you a real sense of what it's like to be riding around in space. That's what the character is about and that is what we're trying to accomplish."

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

In preparing to launch the Surfer in his new series, Englehart went back and reviewed all of the appearances of the character over the past 20 years. This review led him to a list of issues which he thinks take best advantage of the new Surfer's originality.

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"Among the issues that I think are crucial to the Surfer would certainly be FF #48-50, where he was introduced, and FF #57-60, which involve Dr. Doom and the barrier. Then there would be the first ten issues of the **Silver Surfer** magazine from the Sixties," Englehart suggests, "and **Sub-Mariner** #'s 34 and 35, which was where Roy Thomas came up with the idea for the Defenders. I suppose that I'll have to mention my **Defenders** issues, as well as issues 8 to 11. Then there's Marv Wolfman's Dracula story with the Surfer in #50 and John Byrne's Silver Surfer issue. Those are the ones that I would say are pretty much classics or at least essential in regarding the character's career.

"The Surfer hasn't really appeared in a lot of bad stories. People have always tried to do something special with him. If you really wanted to know what the Surfer was about and didn't want to buy everything he appeared in, those are the ones that I would suggest. Our impression is that there's a lot of people waiting to see the Surfer appear again. He seems to have a pretty good legend about him going into all this."

There is one Silver Surfer story that no one knows quite what to make of. No matter how hard they try, you just can't make it fit in the otherwise carefully crafted continuity. In 1978, Simon & Schuster published a 100-page Silver Surfer graphic novel by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby. Fans had been hoping for this for years, but within the first few pages something was clearly different. The tale of the Surfer's exile on Earth was told without reference to the Fantastic Four, Alicia Masters or the Watcher, all crucial players in the previously published comic books. The story ended with the Surfer deciding to resume his former role as the herald of Galactus. Nothing in the story was ever accepted into the official Marvel canon. No subsequent appearances of the Surfer in Marvel comics even attempted to reconcile the graphic novel to the continuity. It was ignored. And the longer it was ignored, the more impossible it was to fit into the Surfer's history. Even Englehart has decided that it just doesn't fit.

"That came from the period when Kirby really didn't want to do characters that he'd already done," Englehart explains. "If he did do them he tried to come up with some new slant on them, like the Hulk robot in **The Eternals** and the Captain America that was very different from mine which had appeared just before it. So that Silver Surfer graphic novel doesn't really fit anywhere. It's a nice example of Lee and Kirby, but I don't really consider this incarnation part of the canon. It's just a story.

"In the same light I should mention that the original 40-page issue that John Buscema and I did, which was going to be the first issue of the 12-part Earthbound limited series also no longer fits anywhere in the continuity. Al Milgrom tells me he might like to run it in two issues of **Marvel Fanfare**, so I've got one which doesn't fit either!"

The Surfer as he was first visualized by Kirby is still the definitive version of the character according to new series artist Rogers, "I was reading the **Fantastic Four** regularly when the Surfer made his first appearance. Then in the John Buscema books. When the Surfer went by the wayside and wasn't featured regularly, I lost track of him. Those first years of his appearance by Kirby were my strongest impression of the character."

FLIGHT PLANS

When the Surfer takes off into space, he will leave his years on the Earth far behind. In fact there isn't even a retelling of his origin planned.

"In the first issue, Reed and the Surfer review all the times before that they tried to get him off the Earth. That's the biggest recap that I've got so far," Englehart reveals. "I hope that there aren't thousands of Shalla Bal fanatics out there who'll be saddened by this, but she goes into the background fairly quickly. His life on Zenn-La and how he came to work for Galactus and so on is literally and figuratively in the past, for me and for him. Not that I've forgotten it and not that it doesn't play a part in his whole life, but I'm more interested in developing the space-soaring Silver Surfer than worrying about how he ended up on Earth."

By going off into space, the Surfer will not only leave the Earth behind, but most of the Marvel Universe of Earthbound heroes who live there. The only plan for him to encounter any other Marvel superheroes takes place when the Surfer guest-stars in the summer's West Coast and East Coast Avengers annuals. This ties in to the third issue of the new **Silver Surfer** series.

"I want to keep him in space, but we put him in those annuals because there was a good crossover story to be done," Englehart states. "As the writer of **The West Coast Avengers**, I didn't mind guest-starring him there. In general, I don't think he's going to be hanging out with anyone. Other than Mantis, there aren't a lot of superheroes who are just looking for a chance to get into this strip. I don't want the Surfer to become entirely divorced from the rest of the Marvel Universe. It's been the experience of comic books for 45 years that if you divorce a character entirely from Earth or familiar surroundings, the sales don't stand up. In general people want to see something they can relate to. A steady dose of science fiction tends to fall apart in comic books. My solution to that is populating this universe with people that we do know, but who aren't Earth people. That's why I'm getting back to all the space people that Marvel has had around. While I'm keeping the series entirely away from Earth, I'm not keeping the Surfer out of touch with the Marvel Universe. With the Surfer just getting underway, a guest shot in the West Coast and East Coast Avengers annuals is not a bad thing for him, but I don't intend for him to show up in superhero books a lot. I don't intend for other superheroes to show up in the **Silver Surfer** a lot."

And so with the unfettered wonders of the universe as his stomping ground, anything seems possible. Once more, the Surfer is at home among the stars!

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THE ESSENTIAL SILVER SURFER

BY STEVE ENGLEHART

"If you really want to know what the Surfer was about, and don't want to buy everything he appeared in, these are the ones that I would push:

Fantastic Four #48-50
Fantastic Four #57-60
Silver Surfer #1-10
Sub-Mariner #34-35
Defenders #8-11
Dracula #50
Silver Surfer (the one-shot special by John Byrne)
and my issues of the Defenders.

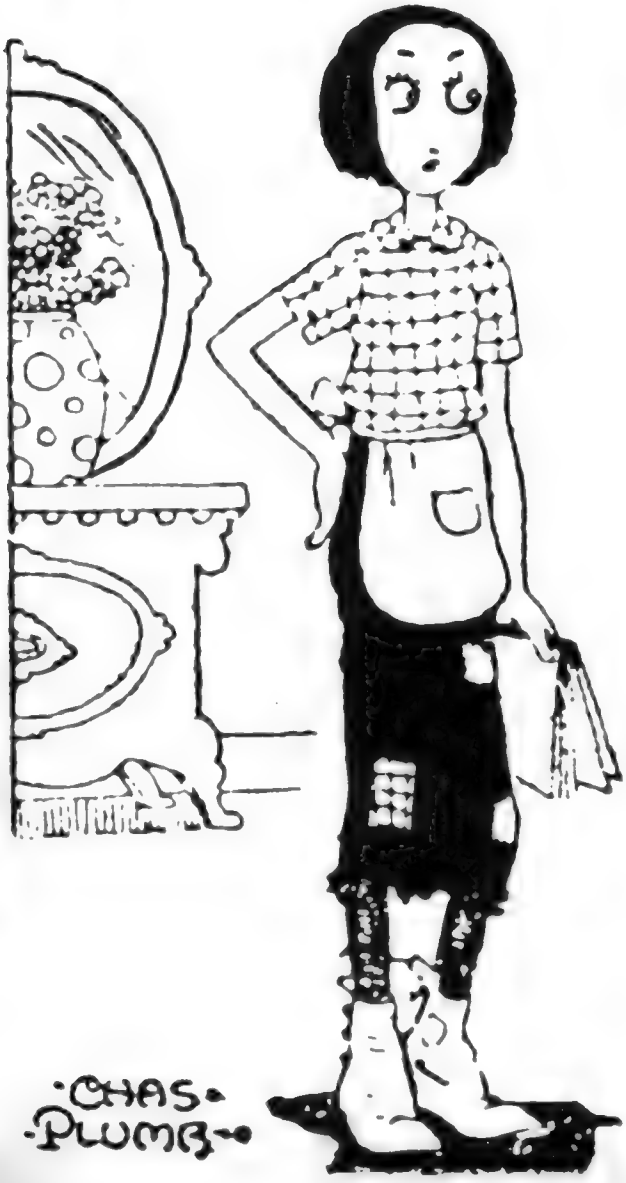
Those are the ones that I would say are pretty much classics or at least essential in regarding the character's career."

STRIP SEARCH

BY RON GOULART

TM

ELLA CINDERS



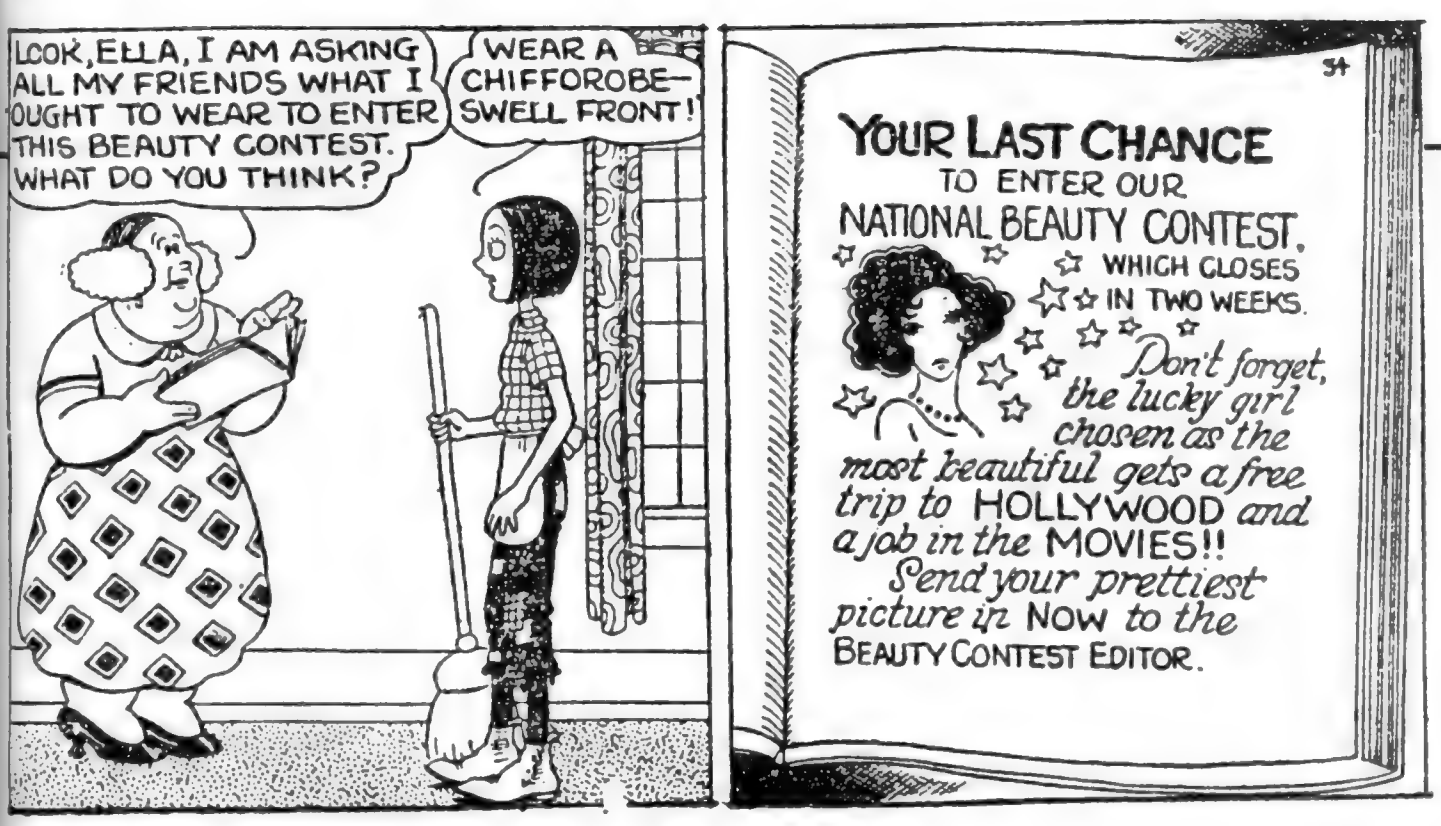
Just about everybody loves a Cinderella story and in 1925 yet another version came along. This one arrived in the form of a newspaper strip with the anagramatic title of **Ella Cinders**. While not as glamorous as some of her funny paper contemporaries, the wide-eyed and feisty Ella outlasted many of them and enjoyed a career that spanned over three and a half decades. Her adventures were reprinted in comic books and Big Little Books and she inspired a motion picture. And during her long, successful reign a small army of ghost artists and writers chronicled her many journeys from rags to riches.

HOLLYWOOD WONDERLAND

The strip was initially the effort of writer Bill Conselman and cartoonist Charlie Plumb, both of whom were newspapermen. Since they lived and worked in the Los Angeles area at the time, it was probably inevitable that their particular Cinderella would make her first rise from poverty to wealth in that wonderland known as Hollywood.

When the strip started, originally as a daily only, in the spring of 1925, Ella was a slim, freckleface girl residing in a small town. Burdened with a mean stepmother and two nasty stepsisters, she spends her days as "kitchen slavey." Her father has long since fled the wrath of Mrs. Cinders and her only ally is her kid brother Blackie. Her only suitor is a not too bright iceman named Waite Lifter. Conselman, who had dreams of someday conquering Hollywood himself and becoming a screenwriter, was fond of pun names and most of his dialogue and captions have the glib, wisecracking tone of silent comedy title cards.

In a Roaring Twenties switch on the fairy tale, Ella is transformed not by a magic godmother but by winning a beauty contest in a movie magazine. It's not, by the way, her good looks that cinch the win. The weary editor—"I've seen so many beauties I'm as dizzy as a bug in a revolving door!"—simply, in desperation, picks a photo at random. Actually, when the triumphant Ella reaches Hollywood, she finds that the studio that promised her a job in the movies has shut down. After weeks of undaunted struggle, though, she arranges an interview with J. Wallington Whiffle, famous movie magnate and head of Superart Studios. Whiffle turns out to be her long lost father, Sam Cinders, and Ella finds success and gets a taste of domestic tranquility.


LOOK, ELLA, I AM ASKING ALL MY FRIENDS WHAT I OUGHT TO WEAR TO ENTER THIS BEAUTY CONTEST. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WEAR A CHIFFOROBE— SWELL FRONT!
34
YOUR LAST CHANCE
TO ENTER OUR
NATIONAL BEAUTY CONTEST.
WHICH CLOSES IN TWO WEEKS.
Don't forget, the lucky girl chosen as the most beautiful gets a free trip to HOLLYWOOD and a job in the MOVIES!!
Send your prettiest picture in NOW to the BEAUTY CONTEST EDITOR.

VARYING ART

Plumb drew in a vigorous, correspondence school style that would never give such 1920s contemporaries as Billy DeBeck, George Herriman and Roy Crane any serious competition. He also seems to have been a restless man with a great many other interests in life. Fairly early in Ella's career Plumb hired an assistant. The first one was a gifted young man named Hardie Gramatky. Plumb, noticing some work the teenager drew for amateur cartoon contests in the Los Angeles **Times**, offered him a job. Gramatky took over the pencilling of **Ella Cinders** and stuck with it until the early 1930s. He went on to become an animator at the Walt Disney studios and later a successful children's book illustrator—his bestknown book was **Little Toot**—and gallery watercolorist. Gramatky improved the look of the strip considerably, making Ella in particular more attractive, and added movie-style closeups, long shots, etc. For the rest of the feature's long life, as we'll see, Charlie Plumb made certain he always had at least one good assistant/ghost available.

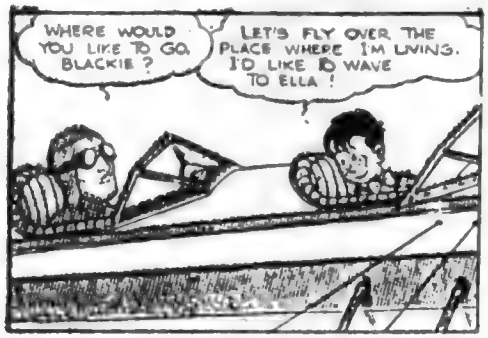
For the next several years the daily continuities—a separate Sunday page was introduced in 1927—are mostly concerned with movie-making and Hollywood. Ella encounters the director Phil M. Waister, the nasty producer O. Watters Neek and the handsome cinema idol Cyril Sweete. There are, of course, many bumps on the road to happiness. Some of them provided by Mrs. Cinders and her two dismal daughters. What Conselman and Plumb were doing in the early years of **Ella Cinders** was kidding Hollywood and movie melodrama while still making use of movie-type plots and suspense techniques.

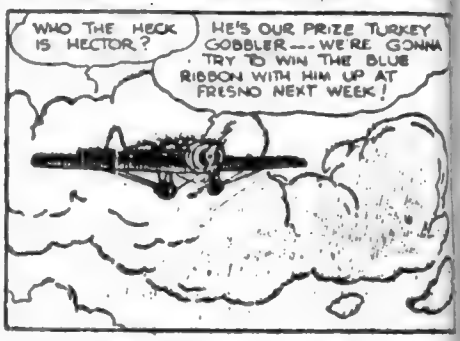
DAILY SOAP OPERA

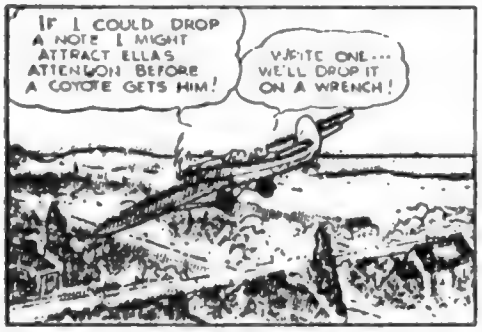
In the early Thirties the daily **Ella Cinders** grew more serious. While Ella herself remained cynical and wisecracking, the storylines moved into the soap opera mode. There were misunderstandings, disappearances, unrequited love along with most of the other trappings of the increasingly popular radio serials. There were also several out-and-out action sequences. In the middle of the decade Ella met and eventually married a handsome, moustached and mysterious fellow known as Patches. Not only was Patches adventure-prone, he also had a tendency to vanish at crucial moments and end up lost in the middle of a South American jungle. These escapades disrupted Ella's domestic life and may've made her wonder whether she'd been wise to abandon Hollywood for other venues. The chief daily ghost for most of this period was Fred Fox, who apparently did most of the drawing and probably some of the writing. An effective

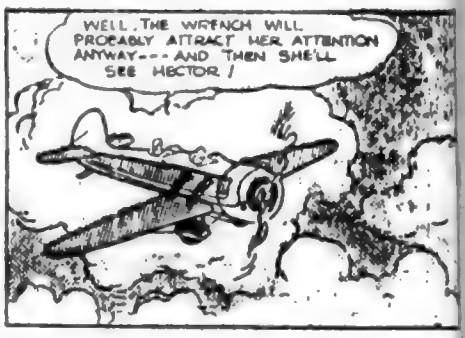
ELLA CINDERS

By BILL CONSELMAN and CHARLIE PLUMB









Chris Crusty

I'M GIVING A MASQUERADE PARTY TONIGHT, CHRIS. YOU CAN COME DRESSED AS ANYTHING YOU CARE TO REPRESENT! DON'T FORGET- NINE O'CLOCK!

IT'S TOO BAD YOU DIDN'T GET HERE IN TIME FOR THE PARTY, CHRIS! YOU MIGHT HAVE WON THE PRIZE! WHAT ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE?
MERCURY-- THE GOD OF SPEED!

artist, with a passion for crosshatching and sundry other pen techniques, Fox gave the feature more of an adventure strip look and also improved Ella's figure further.

By decade's end the strip had changed again, using stories closer to those to be found in the mystery-comedy movies of the period. This held true into the Forties as well, with Ella, Patches and Blackie wisecracking their way through adventures involving gangsters, stolen money, spies, haunted houses, crackpot inventors, etc. There were also satirical continuities that kidded advertising, show business, popular singers and other fads and foibles of the Forties. Fox was moonlighting as a radio comedy writer by this time, contributing to scripts for Bob Hope, Jack Carson and Judy Canova. He still took part in the writing of **Ella Cinders**, but from the middle of 1939 on there had been a new artist.

Jack J. McGuire was a prolific fellow who'd drawn such strips as **Jane Arden** and **Bullet Benton**. From 1940 to 1943 he also drew **The Red Knight**, which offered the only serious superhero ever to be created directly for newspapers. In 1942 Plumb wrote a piece on comics for **Esquire**. He was living in Mexico then and he claimed to have drawn by that time 6,046 dailies and 809 Sunday pages. While he didn't openly admit to having had any assistants, he did include McGuire in the article along with such betterknown colleagues as Al Capp, George Herriman and Ernie Bushmiller. "Minus the Red Knight's plumed helmet," Plumb said, "Jack resembles his lead character. Besides drawing his strip, he teaches art in a San Antonio high school, and in his spare time illustrates advertising contests in newspapers." The overworked McGuire was, of course, also ghosting six **Ella Cinders** dailies and a Sunday each and every week.

Some years ago an old timer in the offices of United Features, which syndicated the strip, assured me that Plumb's main reason for residing in Mexico was to avoid creditors and alimony payments. He said Plumb would meet McGuire at the border to collect the finished art, being careful not to step over on the American side.

SUNDAY GAGS

The Sunday page meantime had been living a separate life of its own. Throughout the 1930s it avoided melodrama and adventure to concentrate on doing gags. These most often featured just Ella and Blackie. There are some critics, notably Bill Blackbeard writing in **The World Encyclopedia of Comics**, who disdain these splendid pages. Blackbeard states that the Sundays were "plagued by jokebook gags." To me the 500 and some pages of this decade offer a fine compendium of some of the best old jokes around. Conselman, and more than likely Fox, had a knack for turning public domain gags and old vaudeville routines into amusing comic pages. Now and then they also converted a wellknown dirty joke into a clean gag, modifying the basic situation and sanitizing the language.

The first Sundays are drawn by Plumb and Gramatky. The middle Thirties saw the arrival of a special Sunday ghost in the person of the talented and mostly unsung Henry Formhals. A very good cartoonist, Formhals filled his pages with nicely drawn people, places and things. He was especially good at depicting the exploding automobiles, crashing airplanes and other catastrophies that were often called for. When Formhals left in the late Thirties to take over the ghosting of the daily **Freckles and his Friends**, Fox assumed the drawing of the Sundays. By the early 1940s McGuire was drawing both daily and Sunday and continuity and comedy-adventure were back on the weekend.

Plumb, perhaps to devote himself fulltime to his wanderings, left the feature in the 1950s. Fred Fox got sole credit from then on, although by this time he was only writing. The final artist was Roger Armstrong, a veteran of the **Looney Tunes** comic book. Ella, now looking a bit matronly, persisted until 1961. **CF**

RON GOULART is co-creator of the Star Hawks comic strip along with Gil Kane. He has over 140 books to his name along with various articles in major publications in too many fields to mention. He has won awards for mystery, science fiction and western stories and is considered to be one of the world's leading experts in popular culture.

Games™

BY STEVE PERRIN

PICK A CARD ANY CARD

Some four or five years ago, I wrote a game called **Superworld**. I was proud of it, despite a questionable editing job done by one of my bosses. It was fairly well received critically, and there are little pockets of devoted players still playing it, but it didn't rack up sales like **Champions** or **Villains and Vigilantes**. The other games were first, after all, and cheaper. This is a fatal combination.

Now the publisher, Chaosium, has basically shut the game down and there will be no more support for it. I have even received back the rights to the names of organizations and characters used in the game, so they might show up in my other game work, or comics work, in the future.

However, one thing came out of that game that makes me very proud.

About a year after the game came out, I received a letter from science fiction writer George R.R. Martin, author of such epochal works of fantasy as **Armageddon Rag** and **Fever Dream**, and the infinitely more forgettable **Dying of the Light**. (Read the first two, forget the other one.)

The letter from George started out " Do you realize you've owed me a letter since 1966?" He was right. In those halycon days, we were students at opposite ends of the country and both budding young comics fan writers. We corresponded fitfully, then I got involved in convention fandom and party fandom and dropped most of my correspondence, including that with George.

The main brunt of his letter, however, had to do with **Superworld**. It seemed that a friend had given it to him for Christmas or his birthday and he had gotten thoroughly entangled, to the extent of not writing any fiction for about a year because he was too busy running **Superworld** games. He was writing to thank me for the game and blame me for his lack of writing.

A long correspondence followed, as I tried to get him to make use of his game experience to write up an adventure for **Superworld**. Games don't pay like writing fiction, but at least there would be some money involved. Just as we were about to close the deal, however, I stopped working at Chaosium and Chaosium devalued **Superworld**. No more adventure from George R.R. Martin.

However, George is a resourceful kinda guy. His gaming group consisted of several other authors; his general circle of friends included many other authors with a love for comics and their heroes. There had to be a way to put all this together...

The result is **Wild Cards**, a "Shared-world" anthology from Bantam Books. The authors all write stories about characters in a somewhat different New York from the one we know, and even from the one portrayed in Marvel or DC comics.

It seems that in 1946 some experimenting aliens from the planet Takis decide to use genetically similar humans as guinea pigs for an experiment in radical DNA modificaton through a virus. Another member of the race attempts to stop them, the experimenters' ship crashes, the villainous Dr. Tod finds the virus and threatens New York with it. The heroic Jetboy attempts to stop this act — at the cost of his life — the "wild card" virus is spread over New York, and also into the jet stream for general distribution about the world.

Ninety percent of those affected by the virus draw the black queen — they die, often horribly. Nine percent draw a joker, they are hideously mutated with no particular benefit. Some have powers that do them no good, coupled with deformities that make them outcasts.

The remaining one percent draw aces. Actual, honest-to-God superpowers that make them more than mortal man. In fact, at least one seems to have picked up a form of immortality. These aces are what the book is all about.

I won't go into just what is in the book here, this is not a book review column. I recommend the book highly, if only because a hero of mine, Cyclone, gets mentioned in a couple of places. If you all go out and buy this book and its two successors (**Aces High** and **Jokers Wild**), I might have a story in the second series.

No, the point of this discussion is the action of translating game into story. As it happens, several of the characters are taken almost directly from characters played in Martin's regular **Superworld** campaign. George was kind enough to tell me who among the authors were part of the game, but refused to tell me which of their characters in the stories are inspired by **Superworld** heroes. Let's see if I can figure it out.

George Martin — Since he was the Gamemaster, I doubt his main hero, The Great and Powerful Turtle, was a **Superworld** character. However, both the Turtle and Fatman could have been Non Player Characters of George's.

Melinda Snodgrass — Dr. Tachyon uses classic **Superworld** powers (telepathy and mind control), but I doubt he was a character *under that name and with that origin* in the campaign. She may have taken a favorite game character's *modus operandi* and worked with it to create her book character.

Walter Jon Williams — It is doubtful that the subject of Walter's story in the original book is out of a **Superworld** game. He and his confederates are too normal, too much like basic heroes, without the exotic characteristics and attitudes that make up an interesting **Superworld** character However, his Modular Man character appearing in **Aces High** is almost certainly a **Superworld** character.

Victor Milan — Captain Trips is probably created for the book series (for those who haven't run into the Captain Trips name, this is what his character in "Transfigurations" becomes in modern times.). However, the heroes that the captain turns into, such as Aquarius, Jumpin' Jack Flash, Sunshine Superman, *et al*, are all probably **Superworld** characters that Milan decided to combine under one hero by using the Captain Trips enabling device.

John Miller — The Yeoman (who, again, doesn't use that name in the first story) could easily be a **Superworld** character. There is nothing in the story, however, to tell me whether he is or not, since he is just like any other Punisher/Executioner/Death Merchant-style character.

Other characters showing up here and there, such as the winged Peregrine, are **Superworld** characters contributed by non-writer members of George's gaming group; but I'm cheating in mentioning these, since I talked to some of the people about three years ago and heard all about the characters.

Well, George, how'd I do? Did I find them all?

ARRIVAL OF THE ROBOTS

Speaking of games I've written, **Robot Warriors** is out as of this writing, early January, 1987. In all, I'm pretty happy with it. There are a couple of typographical errors, but in the main it worked out just fine.

I'm not thrilled with the cover. It was done at the last minute when the contracted-for cover didn't meet the Iron Crown Enterprises editorial standards. The cover they used really makes me wonder how bad the original was.

We're also not helped by the fact that the official licensed **Robotech** game came out about the same time. However, I'm told that **Robot Warriors** has been selling out fairly regularly in the local stores, so I have great hopes for my future royalty checks. After all, in the **Robotech** game, all you can play is **Robotech**. In my game, you can build Robotech robots, or your own designs.

Take your pick, but I hope you buy mine, or buy both. End of unabashed plug.

Oh yes, look for **Robot Gladiators**, out by summer. It has a bunch more robots and another campaign premise for starting up a campaign. I'm doing that one as fast as I can, with occasional time-outs to write columns.

WHAT RARE BEAST?

Also from Iron Crown Enterprises lately is **The Hero System Bestiary**. This is the first supplement to the entire Hero System, which is a constant throughout all the Hero Games.

Each of the Hero Games — **Champions**, **Danger International**, **Fantasy Hero**, **Justice, Inc.** and now **Robot Warriors** — has the same general game system, though some elements change from game to game. This book attempts to supply cretures from both the real and fantasy worlds that can be used with all the systems.

I'm afraid that any of the monsters would have to be scaled up to be effective against giant robots, but bigger-than-fantasy is the name of the game with such machines, anyway. The "Hach-u-rul", or Japanese reptile (can you say "Godzilla") is an exception, it might be ready to take on a giant robot immediately.

It is a testament to the true adaptability of the Hero System that this book works. Some critters would be ineffectual against superheroes, but that's the name of the game. Lesser folk, like secret agents, pulp adventurers or fantasy swordsmen, will have a definite tussle against the cretures that should challenge them.

The book is meant as an all-purpose supplement and succeeds admirably.

AN ELEMENT OF DANGER

I have been very impressed with most of Mayfair's **DC Heroes** material, and said so in these pages. After seeing what happened to my Firestorm adventure, I wonder what had been present in those other items before the editors at Mayfair got hold of them.

I'm not saying that my adventure was ruined by the editors. By and large, it is still there, and can still be run and enjoyed, but the Gamemaster has a lot of work to do that my original manuscript saved for him.

I won't go into great detail here. I don't have the time to track down each little change, and you don't have the time nor inclination to hear about it. I will tell you that Encounter Five originally involved Professor Stein being invited to Dr. Adams' home, and the two of them being surprised by Silver Deer. Other heroes had other ways of getting involved in the game. Instead, the editors concentrated on one of the other possibilities (not necessarily a bad idea) but failed to change the speech I gave Silver Deer, which makes no sense in the current context. The players are left wondering how they got into this situation, where Dr. Adams is, and why this supervillain and her minions are just hanging around if they've already captured Dr. Adams. Very sloppy editing, I'm afraid.

I'm also disappointed that no picture of Firehawk was provided, and the pictures of Silver Deer and Matter Master were less than inspired. Did the DC People not come up with anything usable? This seems strange in light of the fine pictures provided in recent issues of **Who's Who**.

Oh, well. Buy **An Element of Danger** anyway, I need the royalties. Besides, it's still a good adventure, with opportunities to play either Firestorm (double personalities are always interesting roleplaying challenges) or your own characters.

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES

The real benefit of sourcebooks, such as the **Legion of Super-Heroes** reference from Mayfair, is not so much their use as a game product, but in their very real value to a fan of the series they are a source for. The **Legion of Super-Heroes, Volume I** fulfills this value, and then some.

Legion scripter Paul Levitz is one of the authors. I'm sure that his contribution had nothing to do with the game statistics, but what he provided is what the real Legion fan wants — more background, personality and bits of business on each hero than can be encompassed in a dozen **Who's Who** entries.

Moreover, virtually every significant enemy of the Legion is also presented, with details on each one's motivators, needs and current status.

The other autor, Steve Crow, has done his work well, too. The gaming statistics seem reasonable from my experience of running more than a half dozen **DC Heroes** games. People will quibble about whether Superboy is stronger or weaker than Supergirl, or if Timber Wolf should be as strong as portrayed, but that's all minor stuff.

Crow has added eight new powers to the game, plus repeating one that already showed up in **Four Horsemen of Apokolips**, which I reviewed a couple of months ago.This repetition is because the main user of this power, Darkseid, shows up in both books. The new powers could perhaps have been duplicated with some of the powers

already given in the rules, but **DC Heroes** doesn't lend itself to manipulation the way **Champions** or **Superworld** does. Sometimes it's a lot easier to just invent a new power.

Volume II is supposed to be coming out soon. That will deal with the world(s) of the Legion — a sort of gazeteer of the galaxy. I look forward to it.

In the meantime, Steve Crow and Chris Mortika present the first part of an extended Legion adventure to keep Legion fans on their toes, **The Pawns of Time**. The villain is long-time Legion foe, the Time Trapper. Old Trapsy has "resurrected" six dead Legionnaires by snatching them out of the time stream before they died and brainwashing them into thinking the Legion has gone bad and only the "dead" Legionnaires can keep their erstwhile comrades from destroying the Galaxy. Since one of their number is now non-existent Supergirl, they have a pretty good chance of doing just that.

In case the players didn't pick up the Legion sourcebook, the new powers that pertain to the adventure are repeated here in abbreviated form.

The adventure takes our heroes all over the Galaxy, running into such luminaries as the Champions of Lallor, Mantis Morlo, members of the new Fatal Five and finally the Infinite Man, the centerpiece of the Time Trapper's ultimate plot.

Even if the heroes lose this adventure, the universe does not come to an end. Of course, it might if they are not more successful in the next three adventures, coming soon.

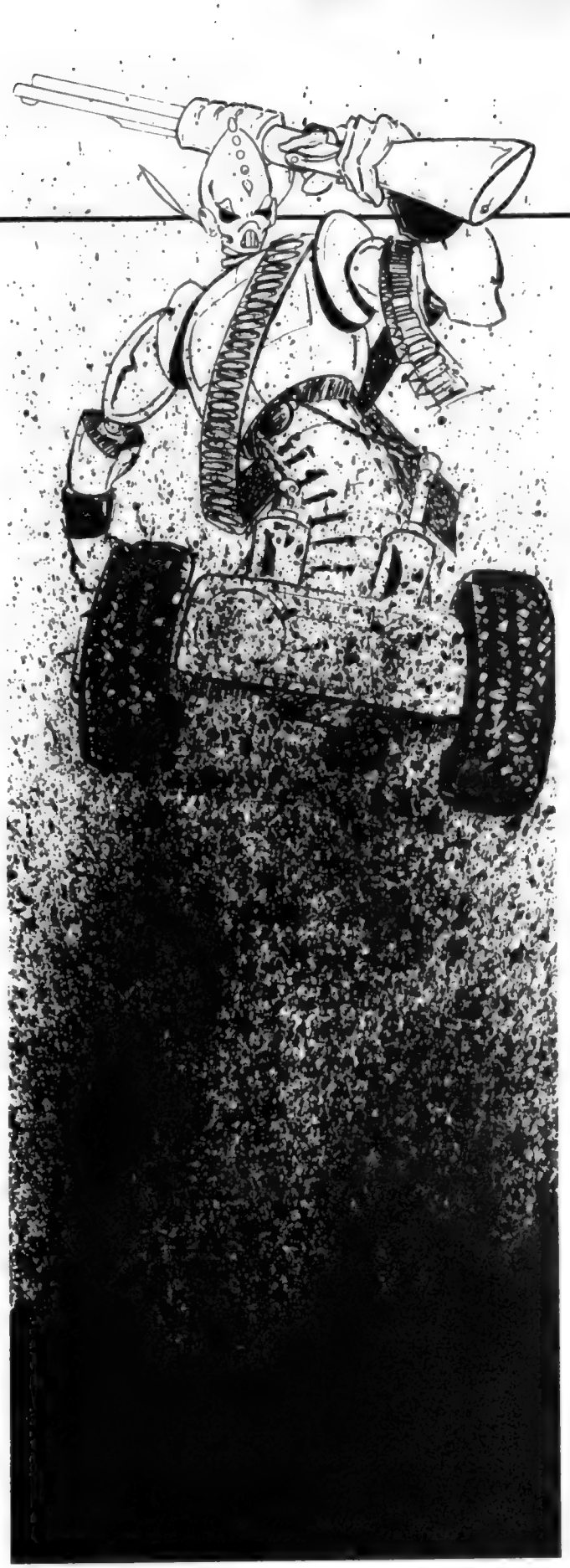
I don't actually like this. Once all four are out, there will be no problem with dragging the adventure out, but now, when the next adventure will probably be months-in-coming, the players can be left very frustrated if they failed in the first round and can't do anything about it for months. Worse, when the Gamemaster finally has the second book in the series, the players have to dredge up all that frustration again so they are ready for the second step. And then, of course, the third step is probably another six months in coming.

DON'T ASK

Like **Pawns of Time**, this module deals with a threat to the universe as we now know it. Unlike the other module, this one is complete in one book.Also unlike the other module, this one is just plain strange.

For anyone unfamiliar with Ambush Bug (now do you know why I say it's strange?), he's a parody hero who has been wandering about the DC universe for the last five years or so. His favorite foil has been Superman, but he's taken on almost everyone else in his two miniseries' pages. (I stopped reading Ambush Bug after the first one because I thought the authors were getting too arch for good humor. Just call me an ol' stick-in-the-mud.)

However, perhaps because he was restrained by needing an adventure that **DC Heroes** characters could relate to, author Scott Jenkins has come up with a fun module that uses most of the best of the Bug.



I won't try to get into the plot of the piece. The heroes must help defeat Luthor's attempt to become the Master of All Space and Time, and suffer the consequences when Ambush Bug gets the power instead. The consequences are rather severe, but funny.

The adventure should make for some happily frustrated heroes, but be sure to play with people who can stand to see their characters frustrated and foiled at every turn by sheer insanity. It's no place for a player without a sense of humor.

SAVING THE QUEEN

About two years ago, Games Workshop of England issued **Golden Heroes**, their own entry into the superhero game race. They've supported the game assiduously in their magazine, **The White Dwarf**, but have not issued much else in the way of supplemental material.

I assume that **Golden Heroes** is popular in England; I am told that **Champions** sales have fallen off tremendously. This probably has something to do with Games Workshop preferring to support their own game. So far, however, GH has not had a lot of a following in America.

Lamentably for Games Workshop, **Queen Victoria and the Holy Grail** is not going to do much to help the situation. This is strictly an adventure for British heroes. Would you believe Queen Victoria was quickfrozen before death (they buried a wax dummy) and lives on in a block of ice until the Holy Grail (left in the keeping of the Royal Family of Britain for centuries, but stolen during the bustle of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee) is recovered? How about Moran Le Fay as the thief? Or that she's been keeping the Grail until now, when she can renew her immortality?

Sure, that's no more preposterous than many comic book plots, and actually it looks like a fun adventure, but unless you have a British superhero campaign going, the book doesn't do you much good. Why would the British government hire a bunch of Americans to do the job?

Good adventure, though.

ENFORCING ROLE PLAYING

The main bugaboo of serious role playing Gamemasters is players who don't roleplay. These players are just there to roll dice ("Roll Players") and mess with the rules ("Rule Players"). In the Hero Games **Champions** adventure, **The Coriolis Effect**, Dennis Mallonee is attempting to enforce role playing on those who play the adventure.

In general the Gamemaster is presented with a set of non-player characteristics that he must make the heroes interact with. There's the old, retired, supermagician, Doctor Arcane, and his winsome granddaughter, Donnah. Player heroes are supposed to honor this old member of their craft and fall in love with the granddaughter. (Perceptive readers of Eclipse's **Champions** comic book, which Mallonee writes, will recognize these names and characters.)

If the Gamemaster does not manage to make the players empathize with these NPCs, the adventures loses a lot of its bite, though it is still an interesting retelling of the Phoenix/X-Men story.

In the final result, I don't really like this product. I don't like forcing players into roleplaying; after all, we all do this to find our own enjoyment, however we can. If you have an entire group of Roll Players, then trying to legislate role playing gets you nowhere.

Any adventure like this one also should provide interesting villains that can be used over and over again. This gives the adventure lasting power. It's more worth your while if, even after the adventure is over, you can still use the villains elsewhere. If the adventure is played as

written, every one of the new villains in this piece should be gone forever by the end of it. Worse, most of the villain writeups need drastic upgrading for them to be a threat in any campaign I've been associated with — and I've played a lot of **Champions** in the last five years.

Admittedly Dennis states that the adventure should take place over several months, intertwined with the normal campaign, but this is not how published adventures are used by the gamers. I think Hero Games is trying to make players take a longer view of their campaigns with this book, but most of the people who worry about the long view are people who do their own adventures. They don't buy games off the shelf for their players.

This one gets an "A" for intent but only a "C" for usefullness.

DEADLY DEMONS FROM DOWN UNDER

Fantasy Games Unlimited knows how to put out a superhero adventure, as I've said in this space many times before. The stories are usually almost Aristotlean in their straightforwardness. (Aristotle was the Greek philosopher who laid down the laws for drama which have been followed or consciously violated ever since they were rediscovered during the Renaissance.)

In general terms, Aristotle said that the action of a drama should take place in a single day, in a single place, with a single purpose. Taken as a whole, this makes for easily assimilated and enjoyed drama. Stretched slightly, it also makes for good adventure.

The latest FGU entry is **The Great Iridium Con**, from Australian Stephen Dedman. This is not an adventure about a mining-based confidence scheme, which is what I first thought when I saw the title. Instead, it's about a major comic book convention and the villains who decide to break it up.

No, the villains are not protesting their treatment in the four-color press. It seems a local high-tech company has invented an interesting scanning device that the villains need to recover a grounded and buried spaceship and the device is on exhibit at the convention. After all, the villains figure, if they strike during the costume ball, who is going to notice them?

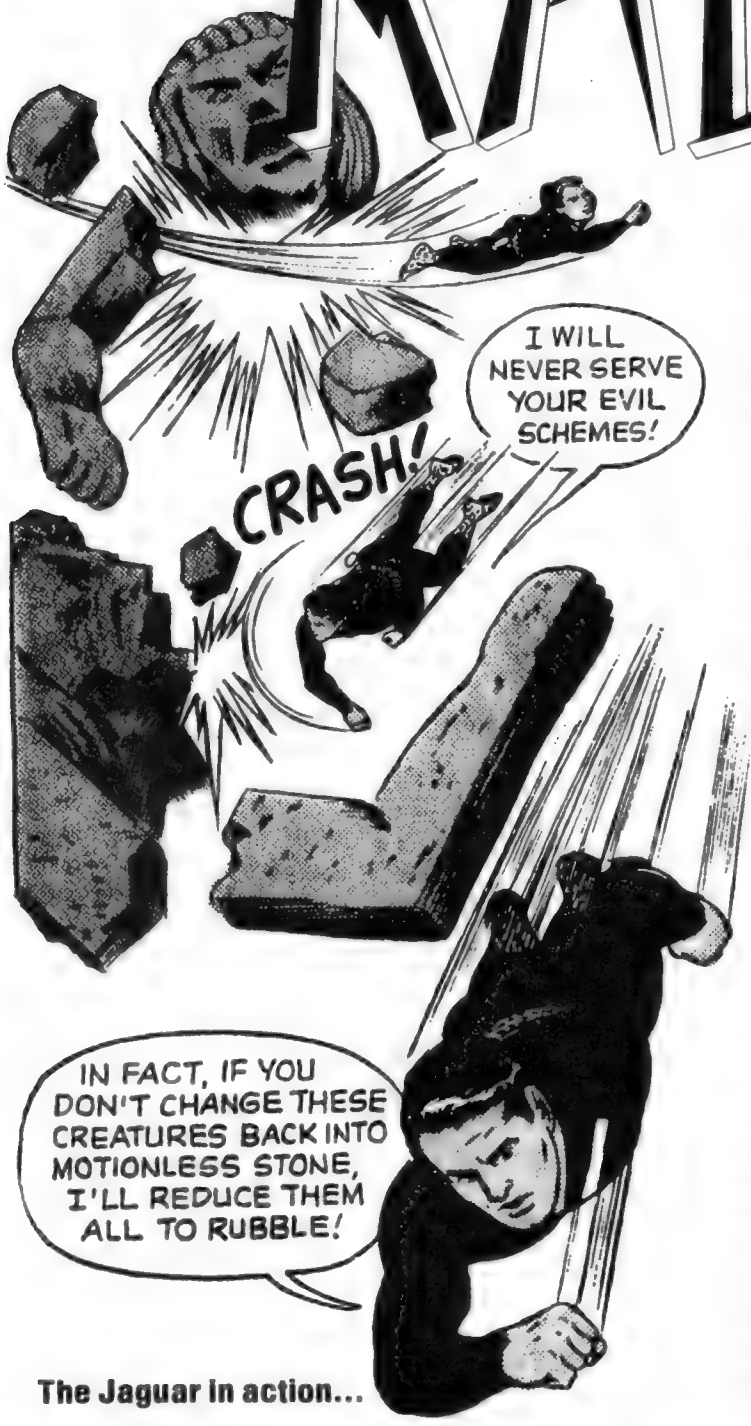
The adventure, enjoyable in itself, also provides 14 villains, two heroes, and a nice plot with enough twists to keep players guessing for awhile. Even better, it includes the two essays I did on how to convert **Villains and Vigilantes** characters into **Superworld** and **Champions** characters. What more do you need? Incidentally, the covers of **The Great Iridium Con** and **The Coriolis Effect** are somewhat similar (which will hopefully be shown by the samples I included with this column). Don't get them confused. **CF**

STEVE PERRIN is the creator of the Elfquest, RuneQuest and Superworld games along with scores of modules and other related material.

SILVER AGE

BY WILL MURRAY

RADIO COMICS


I WILL NEVER SERVE YOUR EVIL SCHEMES!
CRASH!
IN FACT, IF YOU DON'T CHANGE THESE CREATURES BACK INTO MOTIONLESS STONE, I'LL REDUCE THEM ALL TO RUBBLE!

The Jaguar in action...

When I started collecting comics in the early '60s, my allowance was a mere dollar a week. But comic books were only 12 cents. It was enough to buy all the DCs — my first love — most of the Marvels, and a smattering of lesser titles from the Charlton, Dell and ACG lines.

High on my smattering list were the unlikely pair of **The Adventures of the Fly** and **The Adventures of the Jaguar.** They were the products of the Archie Comics line, formerly MLJ comics but for some reason calling themselves Radio Comics. I bought them for simple reasons: they were bright, colorful and, most importantly, between 1961 and 1964, they were practically the only superhero comics not published by DC and Marvel.

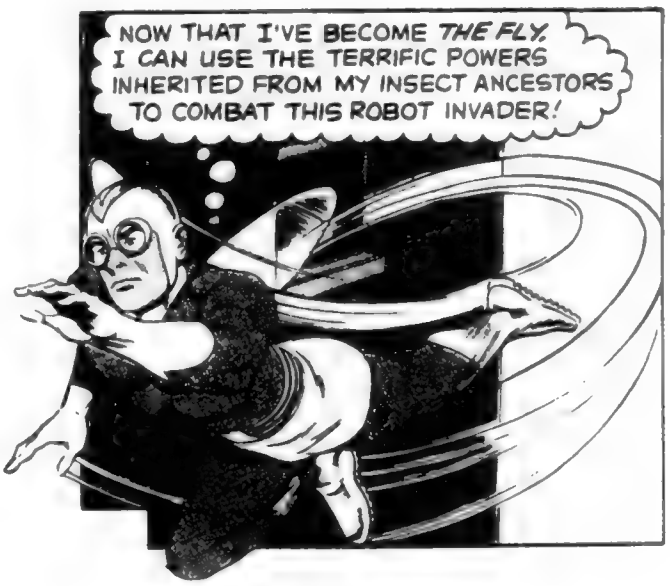
They were also strangely anonymous. No writer credits, and the artist never signed his work. Just very simple stories of a couple of well-drawn and fairly new superheroes. I never saw any of the pre-1961 issues of either title so I never suspected that it hadn't always been that way. Nor did I have an inkling that the figure of the Fly which was a part of the magazine's bold logo — it had to be bold because the name was so wimpy — was actually drawn by no less than Jack Kirby. But I get ahead of myself.

THE FLY

The Fly was the older title, and my favorite of the two. Blond Attorney Thomas Troy possessed a magic ring which, when he rubbed it, transformed him into the dreaded Fly. Clad in a spiffy green and yellow outfit, with a buzz gun hanging at his hip and clear fly wings growing out of his shoulders, he was half-man, half-insect. He could fly, spin steel hard cocoons around his body and communicate with the insect world. He also possessed the proportionate strength of an insect. In many respects he was an anticipation of Marvel's Spider-Man and the Ant-Man, two characters Jack Kirby has claimed co-creator rights on.

The stories were simple, but in truth, dull. The Fly fought the usual hoods, an arch-enemy uninspiredly called the Spider, and hosts of alien invaders. Alien invaders were a Fly staple. Unfortunately, almost all of them were similar suarian beings with death rays, death robots and names like Lxo III, Roxr, and Bra-Kr. But the art sparkled. It was the work of John Rosenberger, now deceased, who drew in what might be described as the Silver Age DC style, clear of line and devoid of frills.

I guess the thing that fascinated me most was the Fly's costume. It was bright yellow and green. But no ordinary green. Not quite blue-green, and certainly not olive green, it was somewhere in between. Definitely an insect green. I've never seen this particular hue before or since, and I'm told that in colorist's parlance it's known as Y3BR2 — which means that it's a blend of 5% yellow, 25% red and solid blue. The reason one doesn't see it anymore is that modern comics paper and printing techniques can't reproduce it properly. A pity.


NOW THAT I'VE BECOME THE FLY, I CAN USE THE TERRIFIC POWERS INHERITED FROM MY INSECT ANCESTORS TO COMBAT THIS ROBOT INVADER!

The JAGUAR

By contrast, the Jaguar's costume was a bright red, relieved only by spotted yellow boots and belt, and a black jaguar mask on his chest. He was sort of an animal-powered version of the Fly, and John Rosenberger did in fact originate that character, along with his uncredited scripter on The Fly, Robert Bernstein.

The Jaguar was Ralph Hardy, a zoologist who discovered an Inca temple in Peru while hunting the fabled white Jaguar. In the ruins, he finds a jaguar belt. Donning it, he becomes the Jaguar, possessed of animal strength, invincibility and the power to telepathically communicate with all mammals. He adds a pair of Nucleon-energy pods to his belt and thus acquires the un-animallike power of flight.

Where the Fly's magical transformation included a yellow aviatorlike helmet and goggles to conceal his true identity, as the Jaguar, Ralph Hardy's pencil-thin moustache simply disappeared! The transformation obviously worked in the same suspension-of-disbelief way that Clark Kent's glasses did.

In fact, there were a lot of Superman touches to the Jaguar series. He had a snoopy girlfriend, Jill Ross, who was pretty sure she knew the Jaguar was really Ralph. And like Superman's Lois Lane, Jill Ross had plenty of competition. There was the green-skinned sea siren Kree-Nal, who loved the Jaguar with the same fervor that mermaid Lori Lemaris loved Superman. And then there was Cat Girl.

The fly wields the power of all insects while The Jaguar is gifted with the abilities of any member of the animal kingdom...

In many ways Cat-Girl was more interesting than even the Jaguar. The reincarnation of the Sphinx, she first appeared in **Fly #9** as a villainess who attempted in vain to enslave him. Failing that, she tried to enslave her natural counterpart, the Jaguar. In the process, she falls victim to evil entities from a two-dimensional world and the Jaguar has to rescue her. She falls in love with him. And for the rest of the series is disposed toward trickery and mischief in her quest to become Mrs. Jaguar. She possessed supernatural powers like flight and invisibilty and telpathic control over cats. She also changed costumes a lot, first appearing in a tawny leotard, then in a blue mini-skirt and striped tunic. And, in a girlish touch, a ponytail.

In **Jaguar #13**, Cat Girl reappeared as society girl Lydia Fellin, having lost her supernatural powers as a result of strontium buildup from atmospheric nuclear tests. She also lost her ponytail and her sandy hair turned black. But she still loved the Jaguar and helped him to fight the Cat Gang. It looked like the beginning of a new chapter in their lives, but the Jaguar was cancelled a mere two issues later. Alas for ongoing subplots.

Superman-like plot devices were also a **Fly** staple. He didn't have a snoopy girlfriend, but he did have his equivalent of a Supergirl. Actress Kim Brand first appeared in issue #13 in 1961. The Fly happens to save her life when she falls from a roof and he catches her — a standard Superman story opening — and they become friendly. In that same issue, an ad warned readers to watch for the first appearance of Fly-Girl in the very next issue.

In **Fly #14**, our hero again bumps into Kim Brand and their friendship — it was never a romantic interest — resumes. Along comes the Metal Monster, an alien whose powers strongly resemble the Hulk villain, the Metal Master, but who looks like a silver robot with an ice cube for a head. The Fly has his hands full fighting off the Metal Monster's robotic menaces, and in one scene Kim Brand receives an unexpected visitor.

The visitor is Turan, the self-styled emissary from the fly dimension. He explains that years ago, he appeared before Thomas Troy and presented him with the magic ring that transformed him into the Fly. Turan, who looks like a man except for his flylike insect eyes and costume, tells Kim that the Fly needs a helper. And you're it, honey.

In the space of a page, Kim becomes Fly-Girl. (If I ever becomes a superhero, I hope my origin is that painless!) Her costume is identical to the Fly's except she wears a yellow domino mask and her blonde hair blows in the wind, unencumbered by any stupid helmet. Good thing, too. She was a doll. Together, the Fly and Fly-Girl mop up the Metal Monster and begin their new joint careers. Usually, they teamed up at least once an issue, but Fly-Girl always had a five-page solo story at the end of the book.

Some of my favorite stories of this period actually involved Fly-Girl. Like the time a trio of girl juvenile delinquents obtain her magic ring and suddenly, Fly-Girl has to defeat three evil Fly-Girls, or she'll never become Kim Brand again.

It should go without saying that Fly-Girl's powers were identical to those of the Fly — including a deadly weakness. Both were vulnerable to chlordane, a component of insecticides. It was their kryptonite. It was even green like kryptonite. It was also as overused as kryptonite. Which is strange, because the Jaguar had no specific weakness and that never seemed to get in the way of a good story.

The Fly and the Jaguar continued their nearly identical adventures, which in turn were nearly identical to Superman's adventures, until 1963 when, after 15 issues, **The Jaguar** was abruptly cancelled.

ORIGINS

The Fly kept going, but he lost John Rosenberger's liquid-lined artwork when Rosenberger took on two new Radio titles, the Dr. Kildare-inspired **Young Dr. Masters** and a revival of **The Shadow**. John Giunta replaced him. I really disliked Giunta's work at that time. It was thin, scratchy and unappealing. Little did I dream that Giunta was in fact *returning* to the series after a long absence.

There was a lot I little dreamed. Because when Turan told Kim Brand the story of how he came to give Thomas Troy the magic fly ring, he left out a teensy little fact. He didn't present it to Thomas Troy, attorney at law — but to little Tommy Troy, orphan!

The story was told in **The Adventures of the Fly #1**, dated August, 1959. Young Tommy Troy is shipped from an orphanage to live with Ben and Abigail March, reputed wizards. The Marches work the little kid pretty hard, and

one day he seeks refuge in their dusty attic, where he finds the fly ring. Rubbing it, Turan appears, explaining that his people originally ruled the earth with magic. But wars and catastrophies ruined their civilization. Some fly people were reduced to houseflies, but others escaped to another dimension, where they rule again.

Turan has been searching for someone "pure of heart" to fight injustice on earth. By rubbing the fly ring, Tommy will be projected into the Fly world but assumes the form of the adult Fly on earth. I'm not sure how the metaphysics of that are supposed to work, because in all subsequent issues, Tommy simply becomes the Fly a la Billy Batson and Captain Marvel. But that's how Joe Simon and Jack Kirby, the character's creators, explained it back in 1959.

SIMON & KIRBY CONNECTION

I would never have dreamed that Jack Kirby, who in my early collecting days was responsible for **The Fantastic Four**, had created the Fly, but he did. I should have suspected as much, I suppose. Somewhere around 1963, I found a back copy of Radio Comics' **Double Life of Private Strong**. A Simon and Kirby production, it premiered two months before **The Fly**. It was a revival of Radio Comic's old patriotic superhero, the Shield, except that the character more resembled in costume and origin Simon and Kirby's Captain America in all respects except the lack of a — er — shield.

No matter. This Shield was Lancelot Strong, given superhuman powers as a child. He grows up, joins the Army as a bumbling private and fights injustice Captain America-style. With a little of Simon & Kirby's Fighting American thrown in. I suppose not calling the comic **The Shield** hurt sales and not reviving the original Shield — who in fact had predated Captain America by several months — annoyed Golden Age fans. But most importantly, Simon and Kirby merely launched the character, hiring a battery of talents from Al Williamson to George Tuksa to draw the stories for them. That may have doomed the magazine. It died with issue #2.

The Fly was a similar packaging job. Simon and Kirby dropped out after only four issues. With the fifth issue, Robert Bernstein took up the scripting chores. The artists ran the gamut from the forgotten Bill Vigoda to John Giunta, until Giunta took over completely with issue #5. In that issue, Tommy Troy and the Marches disappear. The adult Thomas Troy, lawyer, became the Fly's alter ego.

Bernstein and Giunta refined the series and no doubt saved it from early extinction. It was during these 1960 issues that Cat Girl first appeared. In issue #7, in a story called "The Fly and the Black Hood Join Forces," the company's greatest Golden Age hero the Black Hood returned. In the next issue, the Fly teamed up with a pretty boring non-Kirby Shield. The Shield seldom appeared again, but the Black Hood was a frequent drop-in guest.

Starting with issud #11, dated May, 1961, John Rosenberger took over the art, and the Golden Age of **The Fly** — as far as I'm concerned — had begun. His stories were always a feast for the eyes regardless of how limp Bernstein's scripts were. In them the Fly fought the colorful menaces that were the hallmark of the Bernstein/Rosenberger years. In fact, the Fly and Fly-Girl acquired such a collection of them that in issue #21, six of the worst, including the Spider and the Metal Monster, teamed up as the Anti-Fly League. Over the next several issues they spun a Wheel of Fortune-like pointer to see who would take the next crack at them. One by one, they failed. You'd have thought they would have all ganged up at once for a sure-fire victory. But Silver Age villains weren't very sophisticated.

Obviously sales took off during the Bernstein/Rosenberger tenure, because the companion **Jaguar** title was launched in September, 1961 — the very same month Fly-Girl first appeared. All three superheroes got so popular they also took turns appearing in **Pep Comics** between stories featuring Archie Andrews and his pals. But that era, too, was short-lived.

After **The Jaguar** had bitten the dust and John Giunta resumed **The Fly**'s art chores, things went downhill. The Spider returned, but he was no longer the rolly-polly costumed Spider Spry of the Simon and Kirby era, but a bald master criminal who bore more than a little resemblance — right down to the prison gray uniform — to the '60s version of Lex Luthor. Coincidence? I doubt it, because a new writer was assisting Robert Bernstein. He was no less than Jerry Siegel, co-creator of Superman. Siegel did most of the scripts in **Fly** #29 and #30.

One interesting Siegel story in **The Fly** #30 introduced the Comet, a native of the planet Altrox who comes to earth to marry Fly-Girl. But Fly-Girl's antics — she thinks he might be an alien invader come to trick her — put him off. The Comet is actually a revival of a Golden Age hero who had worn a different costume in the old MLJ days. In fact, that Comet died in 1941.

It was the final story in the last issue of **The Adventures of the Fly**. Ten months had passed between the previous issue and this one, and clearly the title was hurting. Ultimately, John Rosenberger went to work for DC Comics. He died a few years ago. Robert Bernstein jumped over to Marvel where, as R. Berns, he scripted some of the early Iron Man and Thor epics before disappearing from the field.

But only six months after his cancellation, the Fly was destined to return, with a new name, new powers and an entirely new look. As will be revealed in the next installment of this column. **CF**

WILL MURRAY writes National Public Radio's Doc Savage, ghosts a men's adventure paperback series and penned the definitive history of the Shadow, Duende.

Animated Antics™

BY JAMES VAN HISE

While Uncle Scrooge has been a star in comics such as **Walt Disney's Comics & Stories** off and on since the Forties, he's never reallly made the transition to the animated cartoons for which Disney is most famous. Other than an appearnce in **Mickey's Christmas Carol** a couple years ago, Scrooge has remained a comic book star but never really become an official member of Disney's cartoon lineup. Now that is changing.

Disney Studios is entering the already crowded cartoon syndicated arena with an entry which will compete with robots, Go-Bots and other weird heroes by offering an alternative — Ducks.

"We are confident that **Duck Tales** will be as successful in syndication as Disney's other cartoons," says Bob Jacquemin, the senior vice-president of marketing for Buena Vista Productions. Disney's other cartoons are **The Wuzzles** and **The Gummi Bears** which air on Saturday mornings.

Duck Tales is a comedy/adventure series focusing on the exploits of Scrooge McDuck — explorer, adventurer and world renowned business duck. Scrooge is joined on his globe-trotting adventures by his nephews, Huey, Dewey and Louie. While Donald Duck will appear on the show from time to time, he will not be a featured character.

While there are a lot of classic Uncle Scrooge stories in the comics which were written and drawn by Carl Banks, the 65 half-hour shows being prepared for airing in the fall of '87 will all be original stories.

Scrooge's home town and base of operations is Duckburg, U.S. of A., a bustling American "every city" which ranges frmo industrial megalopolis to surrounding rural countryside. Duckburg is a conglomeration of skyscrapers and general stores, mansions and junkyards, and, of course, all the *really* important places like pizza parlors, video arcades and rollerskating rinks.

Not far from the skyscrapers there's the Junior Woodchuck's secret treehouse, Launchpad McQuack's tiny, one-holed airport and Gyro Gearloose's nearby "Brainstormin' Barn" (with ads proclaiming that he can invent anything in ten minutes or While-U-Wait, whichever comes first).

Uptown, in an outrageously huge mansion, lives Scrooge McDuck, eccentric, adventurous Zillionaire. Scrooge is a fighter — a "duck of iron." He learned the importance of an unbending will while prospecting for his original fortune in the Yukon. He is a very big operator and dreamer who has conquered commerce on every front and built a monument to himself: three cubic acres of cash! He takes a daily swim in it where he loves to "dive through it like a porpose, burrow through it like a gopher and toss it up and let it hit me on the head!" He will employ any means to increase or preserve his fortune, except dishonesty.

Scrooge is also incredibly resourceful, drawing on a wide and varied experience. He has hunted diamonds in the Amazon, sold yaks in Tibet, prospected for platinum in Africa and had many other adventures. Through these experiences he has acquired an impressive knowledge of languages.

But Scrooge also has a heart. He is not like Dickens' Ebeneezer Scrooge, who lived in rags and only spent money to make money. McDuck treats his money as a trophy of challenges met and obstacles overcome. "I made it by being tougher than the toughies, and smarter than the smarties!" he proclaims. His frequent run-ins with the Beagle Boys demand cleverness, fortitude and sometimes trickery. In short, Scrooge displays good old-fashioned American know-how! Scrooge is one tough cookie, but he has a warm side to him which is evident when he's around his nephews, Huey, Dewey and Louie. The nephews are left with Scrooge when Donald Duck, sailor and chief deck-

The Beagle Boys...up to no good, no doubt.

swabber, is sent to sea on a mission for the Navy. This is the reason why Donald rarely appears in the series even though he was a major character in the Uncle Scrooge comic book stories.

A CAST OF OLD FAMILIARS

Even though the Carl Barks Scrooge stories aren't being adapted for the animated series **Duck Tales**, some of the most popular supporting characters from those old **Comics & Stories** adventures are making the transition.

Gyro Gearloose is a gentle, passive soul who invents things to make the world a better place. His inventions range from the useful to the esoteric: stone walls from spray cans, hydraulic toothpicks, gasoline pills, portable skyscrapers and even a grill which flips its own pancakes. Gyro invents things because he perceives a need of mankind. Most often the "need" is simple and the solution is not. For example: Gyro has trouble moving his heavy furniture to dust underneath, so he invents a matter transmitter to move the furniture to the front lawn while he sweeps the floor. Of course the Beagle Boys steal it to snatch Scrooge's cash from his money bin and thereby hangs one Duck tale.

Gladstone Gander is the luckiest duck in the world. He has an extreme aversion to work, which he never does because whenever he needs something it just falls into his lap one way or another. He is the antithesis of Scrooge's philosophy that real success takes hard work and a sharp mind. His luck drives Uncle Scrooge crazy. He is almost obnoxious, constantly flaunting his unfailing good luck.

The Gladstone stories provide the unexpected twists and turns in an episode. For example, Gladstone learns of a gold mining contest in Alaska but he has no way of getting there. He immediately finds a ticket to be a game show contestant — the winner's prize is a tour of Alaska! But answering questions is a form of work so he gives the tickets to Scrooge. Scrooge wins the prize easily because all the questions are about Alaska, which he knows from his Klondike days. But when he walks out the door with the ticket, the wind snatches it away so that it blows across town and smacks Gladstone in the face!

Although Gladstone isn't really a villain, he has enough unlikable traits that we'd like to see him get his comeuppance. But how can the luckiest duck in the world lose? Make him the star of a 40 million dollar Hollywood extravaganza? No, more like just let Gladstone win by the letter of the law while our heroes gain a grander prize. For instance, in the gold mining contest, Scrooge's nephews use a gold trophy that Gladstone sold to Scrooge and beat it into a nugget that they hide right where Scrooge can't help but finding it. But, of course, Gladstone trips over it and takes it on the last boat back to town. When Scrooge finds out he throws down his pick in disgust — and finds a nugget so large that they can beat it into the shape of a full sized boat which they ride back to town. So while Gladstone won the contest, Scrooge got the bigger prize.

Gladstone's luck is intentionally of mysterious origina and is never explained by means either conventional or unconventional, not by magical auras or lymph gland secretions. Gladstone's luck is just Gladstone's luck!

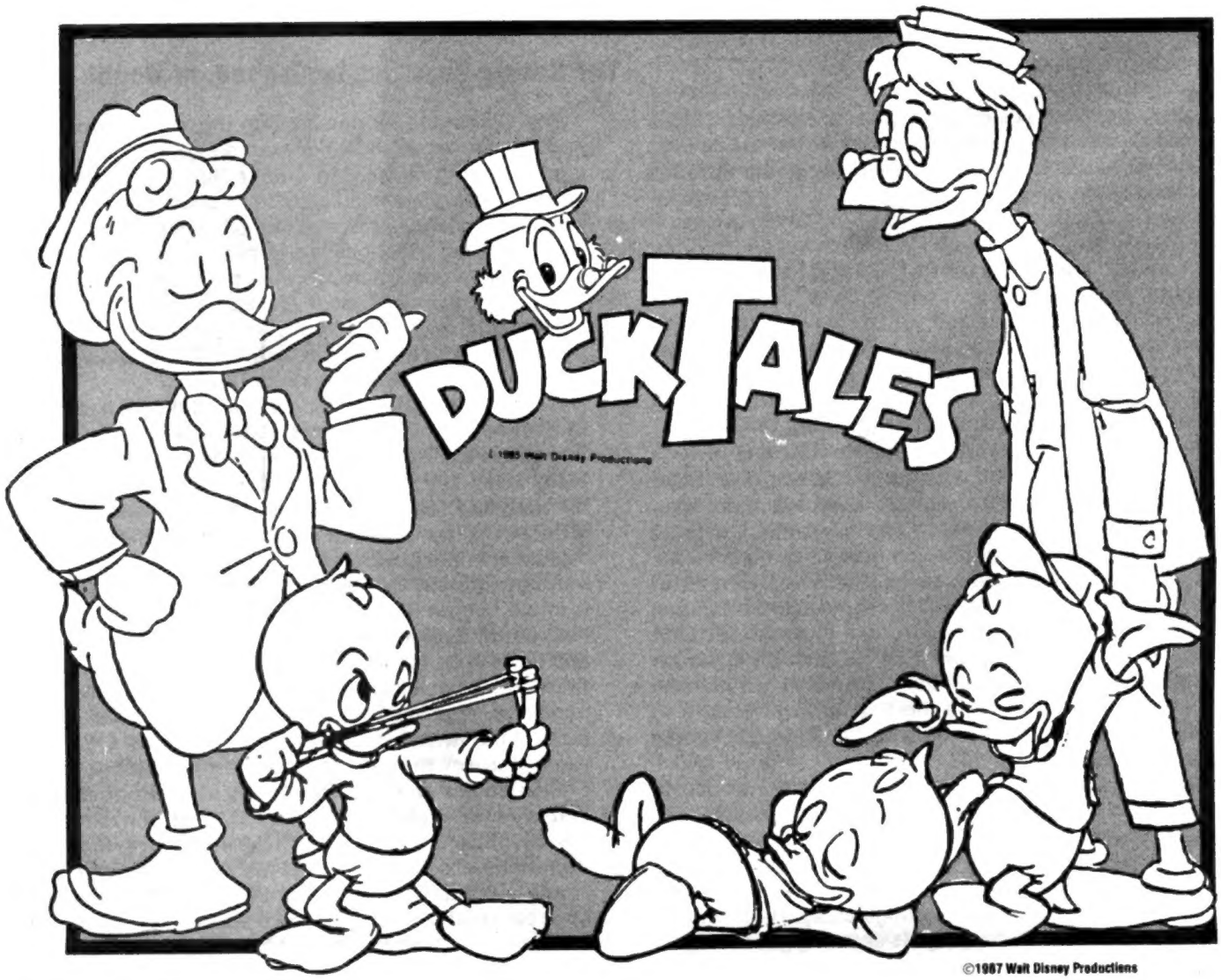
And making their cartoon premiere are the villains who are a constant thorn in Scrooge's side — The Beagle Boys! They've been thrown in Duckburg Jail since the day it

opened and have been breaking out only to be thrown back in ever since. They even have their own personalized parking space out front! The four main Beagle Boys are Big Time, Burger, Bounder and Baggy Beagle.

At the start of some episodes in which they appear, The Beagle Boys will receive a big cake from their mother, Ma Beagle. It will contain the means for a ridiculous new way of escaping. For instance, they'll cut open the cake and find a package of dental floss. Eventually, Big Time will figure out that they can floss their way out through the bars! Or there'll be a new camera in the cake. Big Time will use it to fool the guard by asking him to take pictures of them in various poses: behind the bars, in front of the bars, and finally leaving the jail and driving away in the Warden's car. The guard isn't too bright. After all, he's been delivering the cakes for 25 years!

Sometimes a heist will require more muscle than Baggy, Bouncer, Burger and Big Time can supply. Then they might call in some of their cousins such as Backbite Beagle, Bankshot Beagle, Baron Von Beagle, the Baffling Beaglo (a magician), Bushwack Beagle or any of innumerable others. The one they won't call is the blacksheep of the family — Trueblue Beagle!

And of course there's Scrooge's nephews Hewey, Dewey and Louie, who have been seen in cartoons for decades. A new twist to them here is that they are the keepers of the **Junior Woodchuck's Guide**. Although its use will not be overdone, it is applied in a pinch when something needs to be done that no one should be able to do. This includes an explanation on how to rebuild a rocket engine, translate ancient writings or state the incubation period of a dinosaur egg. Some of the encyclopediac information found in the book may backfire, because of the inadequacies of materials used or the way they're put into operation.



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THE NEW GUYS

Backing up this core of characters is a roster of new web-footed friends and foes sure to stir things up.

Mrs. Beakley is the governess for the three nephews. She is gullible and easily flustered, but she is not stupid. Mrs. Beakley possesses a heart of gold and an ironclad sense of responsibility.

Webbigail (Webby) is Mrs. Beakley's granddaughter, a wide-eyed innocent whose one goal in life is to become the fourth in the trio of nephews. She idolizes them and often follows them, sometimes putting herself in the midst of their adventures.

Launchpad McQuack sees himself as Steve Canyon or Chuck Yeager, but he's really closer to a gung-ho Dudley Do-Right with Evel Knievel tendencies. ("Any crash you can walk away from is a good crash!" Launchpad exclaims.) He has a "gift" with vehicles — if it moves, he can drive it. No one is sure whether he's an ex-military test pilot or an Amazon bush flyer as Launchpad is always giving contradictory stories (Too many crash-landings, perhaps?).

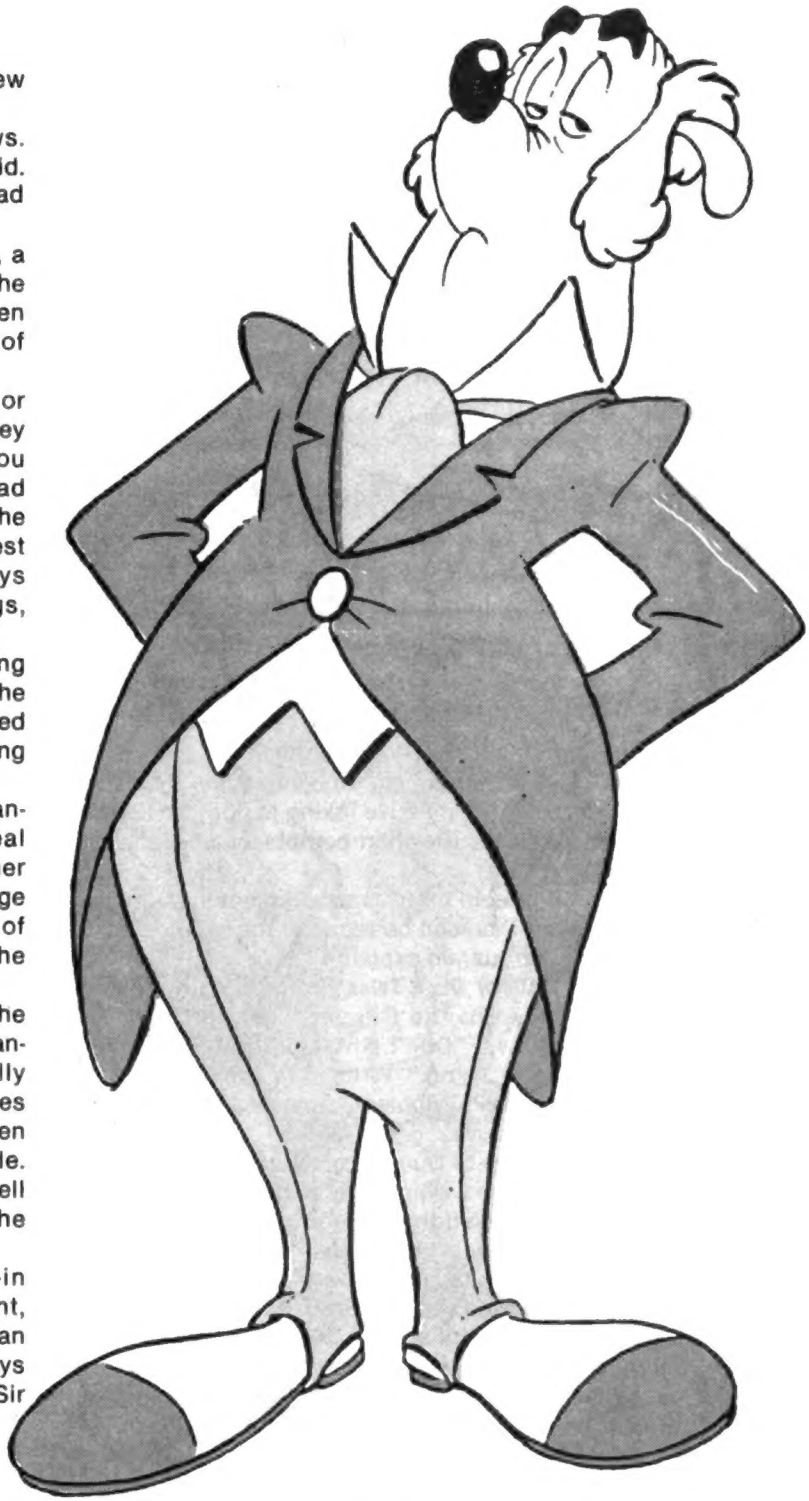
Doofus is sort of a computer nerd without the saving grace of a computer. He's a waddling advertisement to the greatness of Launchpad McQuack, but his well-intentioned chatter often lets important information slip to the wrong people.

Magica De Spell is in the long tradition of bigger-than-life Disney villainesses. Her powers are a mix of real sorcery and mechanical props. She spends much of her time in pursuit of Old Number One, the first dime Scrooge ever earned. She is positive that it's a talisman capable of making whomever possesses it the richest being in the world.

Flintheart Glomgold is the second richest duck in the world and is determined to move up a notch. He is mean-spirited, miserly and has a set of ethics only marginally bound by anything resembling honesty or trust. He makes Scrooge look like an outrageous spendthrift, except when it comes to schemes to oust McDuck from his pinnacle. He's more than willing to join forces with Magica de Spell or the Beagle Boys for theirs is a common goal — the destruction of the Scrooge McDuck empire!

Finally, there is Duckworth, Scrooge's live-in manservant. He's butler, chef, chauffeur, pool attendant, gardner, valet, etc. Scrooge is too cheap to hire more than one servant, so stuffy and properly aloof Duckworth plays all the roles, always with a wry and deadpan humor (a la Sir John Gielgud in the movie **Arthur**).

Duckworth is butler, chef, chauffeur, pool attendant, gardner, valet....



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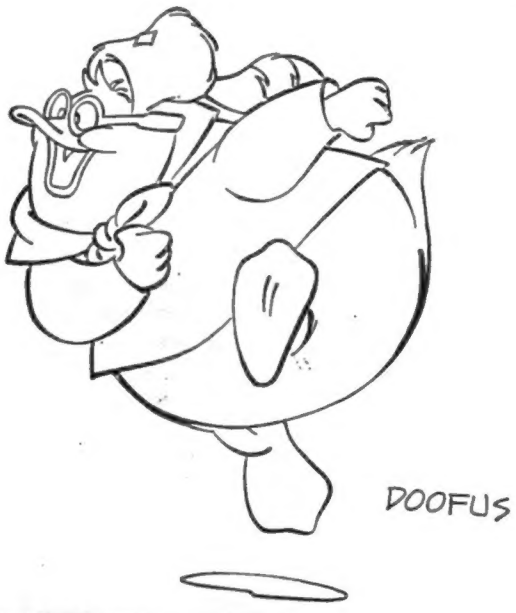
BEHIND-THE-SCENES

The story concepts and development of **Duck Tales** all takes place at Disney's animation studio, including the cel outlining. The actual labor intensive inking is done at TMS in Japan and the cartoons are then completed at Disney Studios.

"This system will enable us to produce a considerably higher quality product than can be found in the syndicated market today," Bob Jacquemin explains.

Stories completed for **Duck Tales** include "Dinosaur Ducks," "Three Ducks of the Condor," "Cold Duck," "Wrongway to Ronguay," "Don't Give Up The Ship" and "Too Much of a Good Thing." Writers in these stories include Ken Koonce, David Wiemers, Jumn Magon, Bruce Talkington and Mark Zaslove.

Duck Tales uses the town of Duckburg as just the starting point for exotic adventures which are launched whenever Scrooge encounters the slightest promise of making a profit. Expeditions in search of lost civilizations, voyages to uncharted islands, treks across unexplored wilderness and underwater searches for sunken treasure are just some of the **Duck Tales** to be told. While the ducks may travel to the real pyramids of Egypt or the real Grand Canyon, they're just as likely to venture to strange locations like the island of Boola Boola and the Grand High Yodel mountains. Come the fall of '87 you'll journey with Scrooge and company into new fables of adventure, mystery and misdirection when **Duck Tales** is unveiled.



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